BUDDHISM IN LADAKH
BY
NAWANG TSERING







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Grub-chen Ngag-dbang Tse-ring (*sketched by* T. Paldan)

BUDDHISM IN LADAKH

A STUDY OF THE LIFE AND WORKS OF
THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
LADAKHI SAINT SCHOLAR

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BUDDHISM IN LADAKH:
A Study of the Life and Works of the Eighteenth Century Ladakhi Saint Scholar

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Dedicated to the Author's
Gurus and Kalyāṇamitras

Foreword

The study of biographies and writings of sages and scholars of the Buddhist tradition is a fascinating branch of the discipline of Buddhist Studies. The Buddha's Word was translated not only into numerous languages of Asia but it was also translated into actual practice and verified by means of condite experiences by his great disciples. The great masters of Buddhist thought and culture not only practised and propagated the Holy Teaching, they also illuminated its meaning and enlarged scope. The records of the life and work of historical Arhats, Bodhisattvas, Ācāryas, and Siddhas of Buddhist history, extant in Pali, Sanskrit, Apabhraṁśa, Bhotiya, Chinese and several other Asian languages, therefore, constitute an important source of our knowledge of Buddhist history, religion and philosophy. A great deal of literature belonging to this class exists in Chinese and Bhotiya languages which no students of Buddhism can afford to ignore.

Not many scholars seem to know that a great mass of sacred Buddhist literature in the Bhotiya language or Bhotabhāṣa is preserved in the monastic libraries and *gompas* of Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim. We use the name Bhotiya language or Bhotabhāṣa instead of the more commonly used 'Tibetan' to stress its Indian context and relevance. The traditional Buddhists of India living on the Indian side of the Himalayan districts have been speaking Bhotiya language for about thirteen hundred years now. The Indian scholars have so far, generally speaking, ignored the significance of this fact. Bhotiya language or Bhotabhāṣa has been one of the living Indian languages for a longer period than Hindi and Urdu languages have been. The facts that the Bhotiya has been confined to the people of remote areas of the Indian Himalayan range, which are somewhat isolated from the mainland of India, and the close linguistic and cultural connections between these areas and the neighbouring lands of Bhota or Tibet and Bhutan, which have existed for many centuries in the past, have largely

prevented Indian Buddhist scholars and philologists from studying Bhotiya as a classical language of Indian Buddhists. Bhotabhāṣa should not be treated as a 'foreign' language by Indian scholars. It has not been a language peculiar to the people of Bhota or Tibet. In addition to Bhota or Tibet, Northern Nepal, Bhutan, and Sikkim, this language has been flourishing in the Northern Frontier regions of India, viz. Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Kumaon Hills, and Arunachal Pradesh. It is high time that educationists and linguisticians of India should take necessary steps to study the Bhotiya language and discover the rich cultural heritage of India preserved in its monumental remains.

The existence of very devout Buddhist communities and tribes in the Northern Frontier areas of India has still another relevance for the study of the history of Buddhism in India. These communities and tribes have been practising the Bodhisattavayana form of Buddhist religion for about one thousand and three hundred years now. While in the mainland India Buddhism was completely assimilated and homologized by Hinduism and its independent centres were destroyed during the medieval centuries, Buddhist faith, art, literature and culture survived in their distinctive Buddhist garb in the Northern Frontier regions of India. The view that Buddhism completely had "died" or "declined" in its homeland after the Turkish conquest in the twelfth century, is therefore not wholly correct. The devout, simple and strong people living in the areas of Ladakh, Lahul, Spiti, Kinaur, Almora, Pithoragarh, Bumdila, Tawang, and Darjeeling have the distinction of preserving Mahāyāna Buddhism on the Indian soil ever since its first diffusion in these areas.

The form of Buddhism which has been in continuous existence in the Northern Frontier areas of India is a remarkable fusion of the ascetic discipline of Sravakāyana, the lofty philosophy and morality of Bodhisattvāyana and the *yogic* techniques of Vajrāyana. The Vinaya code of conduct of monks transmitted by Sarvāstivada School is still practised by the *dge-slong* or *bhikṣus* of these areas; the study of certain representative scientific treatises belonging to the school of Nāgārjuna, Maitreyanatha, and Dignaga still forms part of scholastic syllabi of Buddhist monks and students, while the intricate

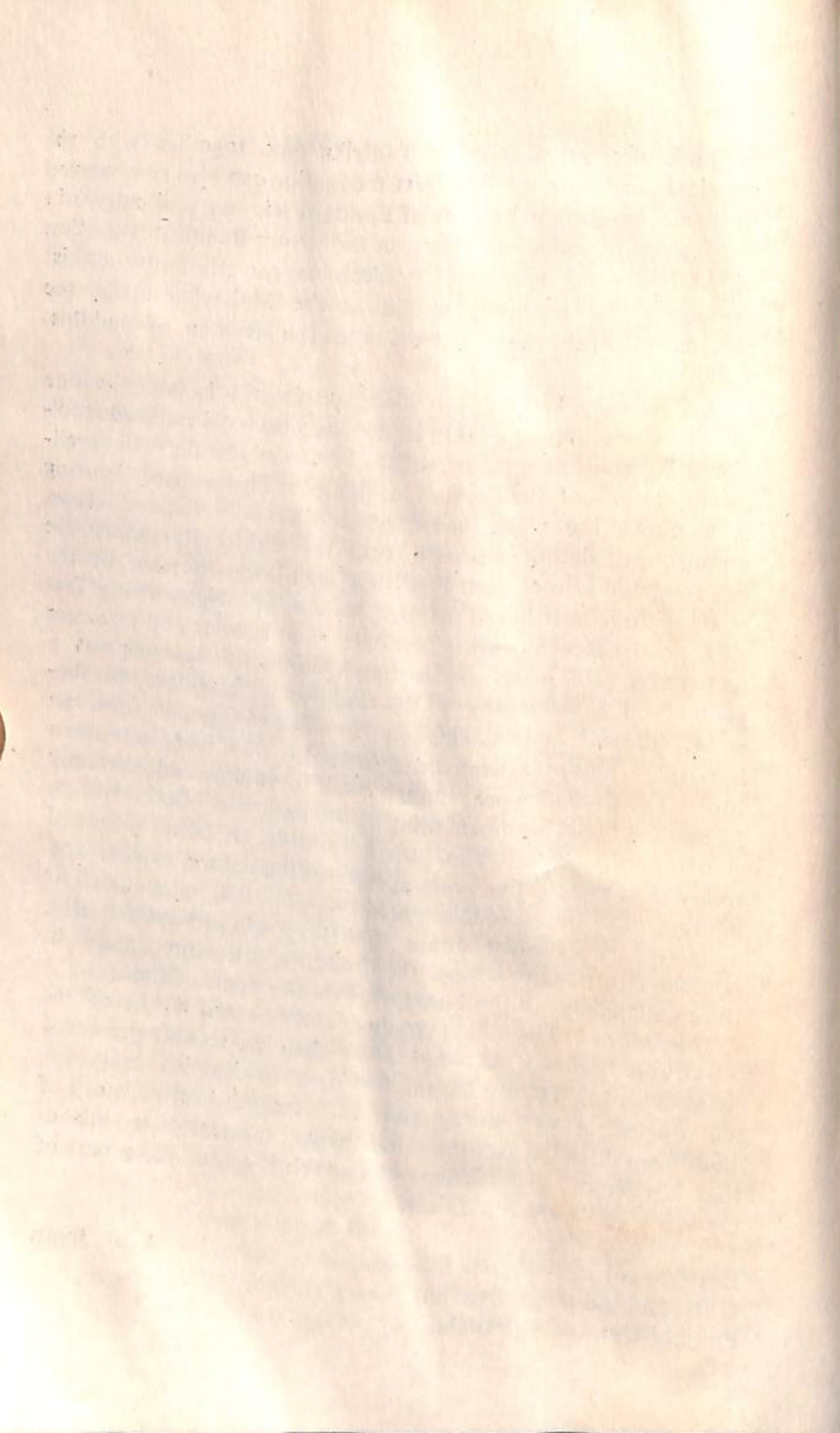
methods of ritual *sādhanā* of Tāntrika type together with the classical techniques of Buddhist meditation can also be observed in some important centres of Buddhist learning and culture in these parts of India. In short, in the living Buddhist tradition of Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh one can still find Buddhist principles and practices taught in the Mahāyānasutras, the Śastras of Mahāyāna masters and the Hymns of Buddhist Siddhas.

Sri Nawang Tsering, the young author of this book is one of the exceptional Ladakhi Buddhists who have received traditional Buddhist as well as modern liberal education. His preliminary study of the life and teachings of Ngag-dbang Tse-ring is a pioneering work based on traditionally handed down manuscripts dating perhaps from the eighteenth century. He has rendered into elegant English a significant portion of the compositions attributed to the Mahāsiddha Ngag-dbang Tse-ring, an eighteenth century Buddhist saint scholar and reformer of Ladakh. His work reveals that Ngag-dbang Tse-ring was a great Siddha belonging to the tradition of Śantideva, Sarahapada, Tillopada, and Nadāpāda. His life and thought form an important landmark in the history of Buddhism in modern India. The present work, though small in volume, will certainly facilitate a better understanding of the nature of Buddhism in contemporary India. The Indian Buddhist are better informed today than twenty-five years ago about the nature, extent, and contents of the Buddhist literature in Pali and Sanskrit languages. I have no doubt that they will now eagerly seek reliable information about the Buddhist literature extant in Bhotiya language in the Northern Frontier areas of India.

Buddhism in Ladakh: A Study of the Life and Works of the Eighteenth Century Ladakhi Saint Scholar, so ably presented by Sri Nawang Tsering for the first time in English language, has opened a new line of study and research in the history of Buddhism in India. Among other things, it clearly establishes that the study of Buddhism of Ladakh is essentially a part of the study of World Buddhism.

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Preface

For some years now, I have been thinking of making a contribution to the religious and cultural history of the western Himalayan region. Coming as I do from Ladakh, I am fortunate in having access to the rich literary and archaeological materials for a study of Buddhism in Ladakh and Western Tibet. When I took up the position of a Lecturer in Tibetan in Punjabi University, Patiala, in 1974, Professor L.M. Joshi encouraged me to pursue Buddhist Studies from Tibetan sources. Following his advice I took up the present work.

In the following pages, I have presented the results of my study of the life and works of Grub-chen Ngag-dbang Tse-ring, a most important religious figure in the history of eighteenth century Ladakh. Hithertofore, nothing about the life and teaching of this man has been published in any language. This effort is therefore a pioneer one. I hope and believe that this small contribution on my part will pave the way for a better understanding of the religious history of Ladakh.

I am thankful to the authorities of Punjabi University, Patiala, for providing me with facilities to carry on my research studies in the Guru Gobind Singh Department of Religious Studies. I am thankful also to Ven. Bhikkhu Pāsādika, M.A., Ph.D., formerly Lecturer in German and Pali Languages, Punjabi University, Patiala, for his help and valuable suggestions. My association with him was both religiously inspiring and academically fruitful.

This small volume embodies substantially my thesis approved for the M. Litt. degree in Religious Studies by the Punjabi University, Patiala, in 1977. I should like to record my deep gratitude to my teacher and superviser, Dr. L.M. Joshi, M.A. Ph.D., Professor of Religious Studies in the Guru Gobind Singh Department of Religious Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala. This work was successfully completed under his distinguished guidance and careful supervision. He has also taken keen interest in its early publication. He has further obliged me by writing a *Foreword* to this book.

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Contents

CHAPTER I

Materials and Methodology

(i) Description of Source Material

The present work is based on a printed version of two volumes of Tibetan manuscripts preserved in rDzong-khul Monastery in Central Zangskar. A Buddhist from Lahul staying in Ladakh Bauddha Vihara, Delhi, published these two volumes on modern paper in the traditional Tibetan book form, perhaps in 1975. The title of these two volumes is : *The Life and Works of 'Khrul-Zig Nag-dbaṅ-Tshe-riṅ*. These two volumes contain biographical details of the life of Ngag-dbang Tse-ring, famous as a great saint, scholar and reformer, who flourished in the eighteenth century in Zangskar. Ladakh.

When the present writer, who hails from Ladakh, visited areas close to the homeland of Mahāsiddha Nagag-dbang Tsering, he found that the Zangskari saint was still quite fresh in the memory of local people. The Ven. Negi Rinpoche of Himachal Pradesh mentioned to the present writer the great esteem which Ngag-dbang Tse-ring enjoys in the 'Brug-pa bKa' —brgyud Order. After a cursory reading of the two volumes of *The Life and Works of 'Khrul-Zig-Nag-dbaṅ-Tshe-riṅ*, henceon abbreviated as *Life and Works*, I decided to make a detailed study of these volumes.

The two volumes of *Life and Works* are, as already noted, printed version of the manuscript in a language which might be described as partly classical Tibetan and partly Ladakhi—Zangskari. Volume I contains 431 folios while the volume II 496 folios. In the following pages is given a short analysis of the contents of these volumes.

Contents of Volume I

The first volume is divided into seven sections. In the first

section, we find Ngag-dbang Tse-ring's autobiography edited in c. 1827 by one of his principal disciples named Tsul-khrims 'Byung-gnas alias bZhad-pa rDo-rje. This section is called : *dPal-ldan bLa-ma Dam-pa 'Khrul-zhig Rin-po-che-Ngag-dbang Tse-ring gi rNam-thar Kun-tu bzhang-po'i zlos-gar yid-kyi bcud-len* (folios 1-255).

The second section contains a biography of Mahāsiddha Ngag-dbang Tse-ring by another disciple whose name had been lost. This section is incomplete and ends abruptly. This section is called : *rNal-byor-dbang phyug Ngag-dbang Tse-ring-gi rNam-par thar-pa smad-du byung ba ngo-mtsar-ba'i stod* (folios 257-331).

The third section contains eulogy and summary of the life story of Ngag-dbang Tse-ring. This portion was written by dSod-nams 'Brug-rgyas whose dates cannot be ascertained. This section is called : *rNal-'byor dbang-po Ngag-dbang Tse-ring-gi sku-bstod nyung-bsdus* (folios 333-343).

The fourth section contains instructions concerning the practice of meditation and the repetition of the famous *mantra* "oṃ mani-padme-hūṃ." The title is called : *'Gro-ba'i dge-skul ma-ni'i mgo-brgyan gzhan-phan snying-gi bdud-rtzi 'gro-ba'i dpal-gter* (folios 345-374).

The fifth section contains a short biographical sketch of Ngag-dbang Tse-ring in addition to brief notes of the other famous teachers of 'Brug-pa bKa'-brgyud lineage. These notes are attributed to Ngag-dbang Tse-ring. This section is called : *Ngag-dbang rNam-rgyal-gyi rNam-thar bsdus-pa skye-rabs* (folios 375-391).

The sixth section is also attributed to the Mahāsiddha. The title is called: *dbEn-gnas-ri-khrod-pa-rnams-kyi khrims-su bca' tse-'dir mchog-gi go- 'phang-la 'dzeg-pa'i them-skas* (folios 393-418).

The last section of the first volume repeats some of the materials of earlier sections. This section has no title.

Contents of Volume II

The second volume contains in the first seven folios a versified account of Ngag-dbang Tse-ring's religious activities. This portion is also edited by bZhad-pa rDo-rje and called : *rNal-'byor-gyi dbang-phyug bLa-ma Ngag-dbang Tse-ring-gi rnam-par thar-pa-dang mgur-'bum* (folios 1-7).

The bulk of second section of volume II, however, contains a large number of hymns attributed to Ngag-dbang Tsering who is called lord of *yoga* (rNal- 'byor dbang-bo). It also contains miscellaneous quotations from earlier Buddhist authorities. Some sections are in prose while others in verse. Besides, this volume also has accounts of Ngag-dbang Tse-ring's pilgrimages and travels. This section is called : *rNal- 'byor dbang-bo Ngag-dbang Tse-ring-gi mGur-gyi rim-pa rang-gros lcags-'debs gzhan-phan snying-gi bdud-rtzi-dang bcas-pa kha-thor 'ga'-dbyangs chu-thigs tzam-cig* (folios 9-496).

Date of Ngag-dbang Tse-ring

The two volumes of *Life and Works* of Grub-chen Ngag-dbang Tse-ring which constitute the basic source material for the present work, were edited by one of his disciples in 1827. The name of this disciple is Tsul-khrim 'Byung-gnas alias dZhad-pa rDo-rje. He was also an artist whose mural paintings are still preserved at Hemis Gompa in the old assembly hall and in the corridors of the Royal Palace at Leh (Y. Gergan, p. 376). His disciple was Kung-dga' Chos-legs whom, as Y. Gergan informs us (p. 311-312), during his three years' stay (1823-26) in Zangskar the well-known Hungarian pioneer Tibetologist, Alexander Csoma de Koros, had contacted. The edition prepared by bZhad-pa rDo-rje has been printed by Shri Topdan Tse-ring without any editorial changes in 1975 from Delhi.

About the date of Mahāsiddha Ngag-dbang Tse-ring, I have tried to arrive at an acceptable date on the basis of the records of Lamas of Dolpo and suggestion of A.I. Vostrikov. The sixty year's cycle of Tibetan tradition has been discussed by Dr D.L. Shellgrove and A.I. Vostrikov also. I have followed them. In my opinion the autobiography of Ngag-dbang Tse-ring may have been written by him between c. 1756-1786. According to our calculations, based on Sixty Year's Cycle of Tibetan tradition, Grub-chen Ngag-dbang Tse-ring was born in Fire-Bird year in 1717, ordained as monk in 1736, and passed away at the age of seventy seven in Wood-Tiger year in 1794.

(ii) Importance of the Subject

It is generally acknowledged by scholars that the history of

Buddhist civilisation in Tibet and Ladakh has not received so far the attention it deserved. Dr Giuseppe Tucci, the doyen of Tibetologist, has pointed out in his *Tibet: Land of Snows* that several facets of inner Asian history are still relatively unknown to us. The cultural history of Ladakh is an area where very little scientific work has been done.

We have selected eighteenth century Ladakh for our study and investigation as for as Buddhist thought and culture are concerned. The central figures in the history of Buddhism in Ladakh in the eighteenth century were Grub-chen Ngag-dbang Tse-ring of the 'Brug-pa bKa'-brgyud Order and Lama Tsul-khrims Nyi-ma of dGe-lugs-pa Order. In the present study we have confined our scope to a study of the *Life and Works* of the former.

One of the major centres of activity of our Grub-chen were 'Bar-gdan and rDzong-khul monasteries in central Zangskar. In the last century, rDzong-khul and other monasteries in Zangskar were ransacked several times by groups of Lahuli tribes and these Buddhist centres were deserted for sometime. The manuscripts of the rDzong-khul *gonpa* were damaged and during the passage of these clashes, various folios have been removed and sections have disappeared. This explains the fact that several folios of our manuscript are missing and some sections end rather abruptly.

At the beginning of the present century, however, religious life in Zangskar appeared to have received fresh impulses with all indications of a genuine renaissance. The Ladakhi historian, Y. Gergan who visited Zangskar in 1925, remarks in his *Ladags Rgyalrabs Chimed Ster* (p.310) that "there were fifteen monks staying at rDzong-khul Monastery who were engaged in wood-block carving." The learned author also saw the newly copied rDzong-khul manuscripts in *suo loco* and refers to them (p. 312) thus: "There are kept at rDzong-khul Gompa, embellished with letters in gold and silver, the *rnam-thar* (biographies) of the Lamas Ngag-dbang Tse-ring, dZhad-pa rDo-rje, sKar-ma and Kun-dga' Chos-legs." At the present time also rDzong-khul Monastery houses scores of Lamas. Since a printed copy of the *Life and Works* of Ngag-dbang Tse-ring preserved in the rDzong-khul Monastery has become available now, the present writer has undertaken this study.

The importance of the subject selected here can hardly be under-estimated. Apart from bringing to light historical details of a pivotal figure of modern Ladakh, the present work seeks to elucidate the fundamental Buddhist doctrines and practices obtaining in Ladakh in the eighteenth century. Our attempt is pioneering in so far as we have translated into English a sizable portion of Ngag-dbang Tse-ring's composition. A study of his biographical details throws a welcome light on the social customs and educational traditions. The subject is relevant not only to *tāntric* Buddhism, but also to Mahāyāna thought and ascetic tradition of Buddhism.

(iii) Methodological Remarks

A few remarks may be made about the methodology adopted in the following pages. Our effort has been to understand the state of Buddhist religious culture in eighteenth century Ladakh. For this purpose, we selected the two volumes of *The Life and Works of 'Khrul-zhig Ngag-dbang Tse-ring* which seems to represent the dominant tendency of Buddhist life and culture of the period. A scientific method of investigation would have required a critically edited version of the *Life and Works*. But the preparation of such an edition of our manuscript would have required much more time than is available at our disposal. We have, therefore, used the printed copy of the manuscript without going into the problems of manuscriptology.

The historians' approach to the study of religions has widely been accepted as a valid approach and we have also tried to apply this in our present study. The difficulties of a historian in his efforts to study the legendary biographies and hagiographies are considerable. Where the historical personality of a teacher becomes shrouded in miraculous and trans-historical events and details, the task of a critical historian becomes not only difficult but delicate also. He has to show due deference for facts of history as well as articles of faith. We have tried to traverse the middle path.

Accordingly, we have treated the biographical details of Grub-chen Ngag-dbang Tse-ring more or less on historical lines. At the same time we have not lost sight of the picture of the sage presented by his devout disciples. A major part of the present dissertation is devoted to a delineation of his religious,

philosophical and ascetic thoughts. This involved some philosophical problems; translation of Tibetan texts into English is by no means an easy task but several distinguished western scholars have already set good examples in this field. We have followed the standard method of translation and transcription as exemplified by the publications from the headquarter of His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, Dharamsala.

We have not gone into the details of the background of Mahāsiddha Ngag-dbang Tse-ring because the history of Buddhism during early medieval centuries in Ladakh has not yet been studied. That is a work for an independent project. So far as the thought of our author is concerned, he belongs to the tradition of great sages like Naropa, Tillopa and Mi-la Ras-pa. On reading the two volumes of the *Life and Works* one can easily notice some remarkable similarities between these volumes and the rNam-thar and the mGur-'bum of rJe-Mi-la Ras-pa. The two sages belonged to the same tradition of Buddhist *yoga*.

While translating passages quoted in the *Life and Works* from earlier Indian Buddhist texts and teachers we have tried to identify those passages, as far as possible, in the printed Sanskrit Buddhist texts. But the same could not be done with regard to the quotations from Tibetan teachers for lack of relevant Tibetan documents. At the end of the work, we have given a complete list of the authorities, works and authors quoted in the two volumes of the *Life and Works*. This list helps us in understanding the ideological preference of our Grub-chen.

Our study has shown that although Mahāyāna Buddhism with its *tāntric* tendencies flourished in eighteenth century Ladakh, yet the rules of *vinaya* and ascetic culture of Buddhist monks had not declined in the *gompas* of Western Tibet and Sub-Himalayan Districts of India. The continued vitality of Buddhism in Ladakh since its introduction in pre-Christian centuries shows that the anti-Buddhist activities of Brahmanical followers, Muslims and Christians could not completely overpower the traditions of Buddhist thought and culture in the outlying areas of India.

CHAPTER II

Historical Background

(i) The Historical Scene in mNga'-ris sKhor-gsum (Ladakh and The Western Most Provinces of Tibet) Upto the Time of Grub-chen Ngag-dBang Tse-ring

The Tibetans traditionally derive their religious and cultural heritage from Indian sources and even claim for their quondam royal dynasty Indian descent. Likewise the Ladakhis assert that they have received their spiritual and cultural tradition from Tibet. As a matter of fact, however, Buddhism was introduced in the upper Indus Valley earlier than the seventh century. Buddhist texts in Pali and Sanskrit suggest that Buddhism had reached Punjab, Kashmir and Afghanistan several centuries before the Christian era.[1] According to the *Mahāvamsa* and the *Dīpavaṃsa*, Emperor Aśoka had sent a Buddhist mission to Kashmīr and Gāndhāra under the leadership of Majjhantika or Madhyāntika.[2] The *Mūlasarvāstivāda-Vinayavastu* states that a *bhikṣu* named Mādhyandina had established Buddhism in the whole of Kashmir.[3] The existence of Buddhist monks in Kashmir is attested also by the *Divyāvadāna*.[4] The Buddhist missionary activities of Madhyāntika in Kashmir are referred to by the seventh century Chinese pilgrim-scholar Hsüan-tsang also.[5] The *Mahāvaṃsa* and the *Dīpavaṃsa* give rather a legendary account of the conversion of the people of Kashmir and the Himalayan land to Buddhism during the time of Aśoka. There is no doubt that Kashmir formed part of Aśoka's empire. Kalhaṇa, the historian of Kashmir, states that the town of Srinagar was established by Aśoka who also built many *stūpas* in the Kashmir Valley. Aśoka in his Rock Edict No. XIII states that he had achieved *Dhammavijaya* not only in his vast empire but also in the bordering lands. Among the northwestern frontier states of Aśokan empire were the kingdoms of

Antiochus Theos (west Asia), Antigonus Gonatus (Macedonia), Alexandar of Epirus etc. Gāndhāra, Kamboja and Kashmir had become centres of Buddhism during the time of Aśoka (300 B.C.). According to the opinion of Professor L.M. Joshi, the Himalayan Country (Himavantapadesa) of the Pali texts possibly comprised Himachal Pradesh, Kashmir and Ladakh.

Buddhism made further progress in Kashmir and Afghanistan during the reign of the Kuṣāṇa king Kaniṣka of the first century A.D. Monks from Punjab and Kashmir played a leading part in spreading Buddhism in Central Asia, Tibet and China.

Kaniṣka was responsible for taking Buddhism to Central Asia, China and northern tribal areas of Tibet. He had also strengthened Buddhism in the Indus Valley along with its tributaries, e.g., the five rivers of the Punjab, the Valley of Kabul, Drās, Suru and Zangskar.

There has been very little archaeological exploration in Ladakh. Mr S.S. Gergan, in a personal discussion with the author in December 1976, pointed out the existence of several Buddhist antiquities in Ladakh dating from the time of Mauryas and Kuṣāṇas. According to him figures of the Buddha and other Buddhist deities wrought in hard granite as well as reliquary monuments connected with Buddhism are found at several places in the Ladakh Valley. Colossal figures of future Buddha Maitreya modelled on older Gāndhāra type belonging to third and fourth centuries A.D. are found at Mulbe, dKar-rtze-mkhar and Sod. An Aśokan *stūpa* or *mchod-rten* is said to exist at Tiri village in the Upper Indus gorge. Another *stūpa* of the time of Kaniṣka is known to exist in the Zangskar Valley. A number of Buddhist images with inscriptions in Brāhmi, Gupta and archaic Tibetan scripts are found from Gilgit, Baltistan to Leh.

The royal dynasty of Ladakhi monarchs started with King sKyid-lde Nyi-ma mGon (c. 900-930 A.D.),[6] a great grandson of the Tibetan King gLang-dar-ma (c. 840 A.D.). He had three sons and gave each of them a separate territory to rule over, viz., to the eldest, dPal-lde Rig-pa mGon (c. 930-960 A.D.) Mar-yul (Ladakh), to the second son, bKra-shis mGon, Guge and sPu-rangs,[7] and to the youngest, lDe-gtzug mGon,[8] he gave Zangskar sgo-gsum,[9] including Spiti and Spiti-lcogs.[10]

Since the time of gLang-dar-ma's persecution of Buddhists

in Central Tibet, "for seventy years the church had ceased to exist in U and gTzang."[11] Meanwhile, mTho-gling[12] developed into the centre for the renaissance of Tibetan Buddhism under the patronage of Lha-bla-ma Ye-shes-'od,[13] the eldest son of King lDe-gtzug mGon. This princely teacher Ye-shes-'od selected twenty-one youngmen, Rin-chen bZang-po and others, and sent them to Kashmir to study the Doctrine. But with the exception of Rinchen bZang-po and Legs-pa'i Shes-rab, all of them died without having achieved their goal.[14] Of Ye-shes-'od's three grandnephews,[15] Byang-chub-'od and Zhi-ba-'od were ordained monks, and the former, Byang-chub-'od, was responsible for inviting to mTho-gling the great *pundit* of Vikramaśilā Jo-bo-rje Atiśa (1042 A.D.).[16] Thus the torch of the Dharma once having been lit in Central Tibet, was rekindled and illuminated the whole of mNga'-ris.[17]

When lDe-gtzug mGon's successors had inherited the provinces of Guge and sPu-rangs, the whole territory came to be known as the Guge Kingdom. Judging from the accounts that have come down to us, it can be observed that the smaller vassal chiefs of Zangskar, Gar-zha (Lahul) and Spiti alternately remained under influence and dominion of the kings of Ladakh and Guge. These two monarchies of mNga'-ris existed side by side for several hundred years till the entire region of mNga'-ris sKhor-gsum, over which sKyid-lde Nyi-ma mGon had reigned, was once again unified by the powerful Ladakhi king Seng-ge rNam-rgyal (1567-1594).[18]

The period of Seng-ge rNam-rgyal was hailed by Ladakhi historians as a 'golden age.' During his reign Ladakhi territory was considerably extended. The country's economy was well-handled, cultural and religious life flourished. The king himself founded many monasteries, had several-storeyed silver and copper *stūpas* installed as well as Buddha statues, some of colossal dimensions, and had the '*bKa'-'gyur* collection and many other books embellished with gold, silver and copper. But on the other hand Seng-ge rNam-rgyal could not restrain from attacking Central Tibet and from ransacking Tibetan monasteries. One item of the booty he captured is a huge copper vessel (*tsogs-zang*) brought from one of the monasteries in Tibet and can still be seen in the monastery of Nyo-ma.[19]

Under the rule of Seng-ge rNam-rgyal's son, bDe-ldan

rNam-rgyal (1594-1649), the Ladakhi kingdom reached its largest extent; but bDe-ldan's frequent inroads into Baltistan resulted in his being brought to terms by Mughal authorities, who compelled him formally to recognise Mughal suzerainty over Ladakh. At the command of Emperor Aurangzeb he had to have a mosque built at Leh and coins issued in the name of the Mughal king Mohmad Aqbad Khan.[20]

Unlike his predecessors, bDe-ldan's son, bDe-legs rNam-rgyal (1649-1685), was in no way endowed with statesmanship. His unfortunate interference in the dispute between Bhutan and Tibet eventually resulted in the loss of Ladakh's richest provinces, i.e., Guge, sPu-rangs and Ruthog which were annexed by Tibet. The Ladakhi claims of suzerainty over West Tibetan areas, allegations and counter-allegations regarding the persecution of members of the Red Hat Sect in Tibet and of followers of the Yellow Hat Sect in Ladakh, created an open conflict reaching its climax with the capture of the heart of Ladakh upto Bas-sgo by the Tibeto-Mongol army under the command of Sog-po dGa'-ldan Tse-dbang in 1680.[21] The fighting continued at Bas-sgo for three years until bDe-legs rNam-rgyal sought the aid of the Nawab of Kashmir, with the help of whose troops he then succeeded in pushing the Mongols back upto bKra-shis-sgang. But soon the Tibetan government sent Mi-pham dBang-po of Bhutan, a cleverly chosen representative of Tibetan interests, in order to negotiate a compromise with the Ladakhi king. Mi-pham dBang-po was in the advantageous position of being in the line of *gurus* greatly revered by the royal family of Ladakh. Thus bDe-legs rNam-rgyal accepted his *guru's* advice to make over the provinces of Guge and sPu-rangs and Ruthog to the Lhasa government so as to defray the expenses of incense and lamps and the scriptural recitations in the holy city. Mi-pham dBang-po himself in recognition of his services to the Lhasa authorities was invested with lordship over three large estates in Tibet. As a result of the annexation of Ladakh's richest possessions in mNga'-ris by Tibet, the inflow of taxes in the form of gold, wool, furs, animals, etc., stopped forever and Ladakh was gradually reduced to a 'border area' suffering from chronic poverty.[22]

"None of the Ladakhi kings of the eighteenth century was

great as a warrior, or as a politician, or as an administrator."[23] Men without self-confidence, those rulers were controlled by their queens, courtiers and by members of the nobility. As lovers of easygoing and care-free life they did neither care for the state's welfare nor for religion. The Mughal suzerainty over Ladakh was confirmed, while the Ladakhi shadow kings, unlike their predecessors, no longer had to bother about foreign invaders; instead they involved themselves in internal power struggle and quarrels among brothers, relatives and countrymen. A king like Tse-dbang rNam-rgyal (1752-1782) displayed the typical character traits of the Ladakhi rulers of the eighteenth century. He made the taxes payable three times in one year. For minor offences he would decree punishment by mutilation and finally send the offenders to the gallows.[24] No security and protection those monarchs would grant to their subjects against the constant threat of plunderers from neighbouring states. An army from Nyungti,[25] for instance, ransacked and destroyed the famous Kee Monastery[26] in Spiti and took away even the domestic animals of the whole area. When the people of Spiti implored King Tse-dpal rNma-rgyal (1808-1830) at Leh, to do something to keep those invaders from Nyungti in check, this irresponsible king scolded and told them that they themselves were responsible for their misery.[27] In 1808 the same army from Nyungti entered Zangskar and robbed 'Bar-gdan Gompa and other monasteries. The golden *ghandola* from[28] 'Bar-gdan Monastery can still be seen on the roof of the old Nyungti Palace at Kulu.[29] According to rDzong-khul manuscript Grub-chen Ngag-dbang Tse-ring had encountered with one of the bands of Nyungti plunderers. Hundreds of *lāmās* were taken prisoners, *gompas* were ransacked and Ngag-dbang Tse-ring, too, had to flee from Monastery.[30] The king at Leh was too weak even to hold the invaders at bay. Thus the kingdom of Ladakh disintegrated more and more, the monasteries were badly neglected, and Buddhism as an institutionalised religion was in great danger specially when King Tse-dbang rNam-rgyal himself adopted Islam. The degenerating dynasty of Ladakhi rulers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries reached its total eclipse when the Dogra army under Zorawar Singh conquered Ladakh in 1834 during the reign of king Tse-dbang Rab-brtan Nam mchog-sprul (1830-1835).

Thanks to the irrepressible faith of the Ladakhi people in the Dharma, Buddhism could not be uprooted from their land despite all the repeated invasions, looting and destruction suffered at the hands of the Mongols, Dzungers, Dogras, of people from Baltistan and Nyungti. Such days of great distress before long also had their saviours and eminent reformers like Lama Tsul-khrims Nyi-ma (c.1790-1865),[31] and Lama bKra-shis Dam-'phel, who took great pains and finally succeeded in reviving the Buddha-śāsana in Ladakh.

(ii) A Brief Historical Survey : The Historical Scene in Tibet During the Lifetime of Grub-chen Ngag-dbang Tse-ring

In a dialogue between Ngag-dbang Tse-ring and his meditation-master, Lama Rang-rig, reference has been made by the latter, isolated and seemingly out of context though, to the politico-historical situation in the Tibet of his time. Till very recently it was customary for all monks from Ladakh and adjacent Himalayan regions to go to Central Tibet for higher studies or at least on pilgrimage, and anybody who had not been to dBus and gTzang (the Central Provinces) was more or less regarded as an ignoramus. In accordance with this custom, Ngag-dbang Tse-ring also wanted to go to Tibet and sought his *guru's* advice. He said :

"Kindly tell me any suitable place where I could make progress in my meditation." With a smile the Ven. Lama Rang-rig said : "My dear mChod-gnas, there is a saying that 'whether (in search of Enlightenment) one goes on pilgrimage to India (or not)—the (real) Dharma has to be practised (within) oneself ! Besides, as far as dBus and gTzang are concerned, there nowadays the religion of the 'heathen' Mongols is propagated, while the whole area comprising both valleys and mountains is infested with robbers. The situation has worsened so much so that, whereas hermits can put up with the (most inhospitable) mountains, the mountains themselves cannot suffer the hermits (being terrorised by Mongols and robbers). In fact, this age is a veritable *kaliyuga*, (and due to the prevailing conditions in Tibet) I had to flee and seek refuge here."[32]

Since Lama Rang-ris refers to the Mongols in Tibet, in the following passages some extracts are given from Professor

G. Tucci's book, *Tibet, Land of Snows,* wherein this great scholar gives a clear-worded and authentic account of the politico-historical situation of inner Asia coinciding with the lifetime of Ngag-dbang Tse-ring.

"The fifth Dalai Lama, Lopsang-gyatso (1617-82), had called in Gushri Khan to put an end to the long conflict and get the better of his powerful adversaries, Tsang and the Karma-pas ...Gushri Khan offered Tibet to the fifth Dalai Lama, but he imposed a regent (*desi*) as his representative. However, Lopsang-gyatso soon changed the situation in his favour and elected in 1679 as regent Sanggye-gyatso, his spiritual son.

"...the country was once more united—and considerably enlarged for, after the peace of 1685, Tibet had conquered much of Ngari (Western Tibet : Guge, Purang and Ruthok), taking away from the kings of Ladakh much land which they had possessed since the time of Sengge-namgyel (died 1645).... Many convents of the rival sects were expropriated and turned over to the 'yellow' sect...."[33]

Regarding her political history, it was during the lifetime of the Mahāsiddha Ngag-dbang Tse-ring that Tibet after her all too short-lived independence, wrenched from the Mongols, had to yield to Chinese influence which became stronger and stronger until the thirteenth Dalai Lama, once again, established Tibet's independence at the beginning of the present century.

REFERENCES

1. See L.M. Joshi, *History of the Punjab*, Vol. I, Patiala, Punjabi University, 1977, p. 198-200.
2. *Mahāvaṃsa* (ed. by N.K. Bhagwat, Bombay, 1959) XII. 3; *Dīpavaṃsa* (ed. by B.C. Law, Maharagam, 1959), VIII. 4.
3. *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya-vastu* (ed. by P.C. Bagchi, Darbhanga. 1967), p. 8.
4. *Divyāvadāna* (ed. by P.L. Vaidya, Darbhanga, 1958), XXII. 80.
5. Thomas Walters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, Delhi, 1961, Vol. I, p. 265.
6. rJe-dpal 'khor-btzan (c. 870-900), a grandson of gLang-dar-ma, had two sons, sKyid-lde Nyi-ma mGon and bKra-shis brtzges-dpal, Nyi-ma mGon, having been banished to mNga'-ris by the supporters of Yum-brten, the elder queen of gLang-dar-ma, founded a castle in sPu-rangs and lived there. His younger brother, bKra-shis brtzegs-dpal, went to Khams and ruled over the eighteen major provinces of Tzong-kha in East Tibet.

7. Guge and sPu-rangs in the extreme south-west of Tibet border on Zhang-zhung in the north. In the latter province is situated the birthplace of a sTon-ba Shen-rab, the founder of the Bon religion, and it was from this place that Bon spread to Central Tibet, West China, Gāndhāra and Outer Mongolia. The three provinces, including Ladakh in the West, are also collectively known as mNga'-ris. See : Y. Gergan, *Ladakh Rgyalrabs Chimed Ster*, p. 200 ff.
8. According to the Bod Chos-rgyal gDung-rabs, as quoted by Y. Gergan, *op. cit.*, p. 198, Guge was allotted to bKra-shis mGon by his father and was later on appropriated by the successors of lDe-gtzug mGon, since bKra-shis mGon had no issue. In the manuscript of rDzong-khul Monastery references has been made, in spite of differences with regard to their names and territories, to the three mGon, brothers, the sons of sKyid-lde Nyi-ma mGon, the author seemingly tried to show that all Zangskaris were the descendants of gNya'-khri bTzan-po, the first king of Tibet. Also see : A.H. Francke, *History of Western Tibet*, p. 90, under revised title, *A History of Ladakh* by S.S. Gergan and H.M. Hassnain, Sterling Publishers Pvt., Ltd., New Delhi, 1977.
9. "sGo-gsum," 'the three doors,' may refer to the three valleys that join in the central part of Zangskar; see : A.H. Francke, *Antiquities of Indian Tibet*, p. 94.
10. *ibid*.
11. Bu-ston's *History of Buddhism*, tr. by E. Obermiller p. 212.
12. mTho-gling is a famous monastery in Western Tibet. Ye-shes-'od was the founder of this *gompa* which played an important role in the propagation of Buddhism in mNga'-ris and in the subsequent second introduction of the Dharma into Central Tibet.
13. Lha-bla-ma Ye-shes-'od, formerly known as Prince 'khore, had inherited his father's throne which later on he renounced, entrusting the kingdom to his younger brother Srong-nge. He became a monk and adopted the religious name of Ye-shes-'od. Cf. Bu-ston, *op. cit.*, p. 212.
14. Cf. Bu-ston, *op. cit.*, p. 212-213.
15. Zhi-ba-'od, Byang-chub-'od and Od-lde were the sons of Lha-lde, who was a son of Srong-nge, Ye-shes-'od's younger brother. Zhi-ba-'od and Byang-chub-'od were ordained monks, while 'Od-lde was king of Guge.
16. For details see : A. Chattopadhyaya, *Atisa and Tibet*.
17. Bu-ston, *op. cit.*, p. 212.
18. In case of fixing the dates for Seng-ge rNam-rgyal's reign, A.H. Francke has 1590-1635. S.S. Gergan, the editor of Y. Gergan's *Ladakh Rgyalrabs Chimed Ster* informed the present writer that "the dates of the four kings, viz., Seng-ge rNam rgyal, bDe-ldan rNam-rgyal, bDe-legs rNam-rgyl and Nyi-ma rNam-rgyal, are

confirmed by local original documents and also by the documents supplied by Indian, Chinese and Kashmiran contemporary kings, chiefs and governors." Since the learned editor has consulted most of the relevant documentary sources, the bulk of which is in Tibetan, this writer accepts the dates fixed by him. Francke's translation of the "Chronicle of Ladakh" is an excellent contribution to our knowledge of Ladakhi history, but there is much more materials to be taken into consideration. C.L. Datta had no access to local original documents which are written in Tibetan.

19. Nyo-ma is situated on the Indus about 40 km. southeast of Leh.
20. Y. Gergan, *op. cit.*, p. 389.
21. Cf. C.L. Datta, *Ladakh and Western Himalayn Politics*, p. 62.
22. Cf. Y. Gergan, *op. cit.*, p. 441.
23. C. L. Datta, *op. cit.*, p. 67.
24. Cf. Y. Gergan, *op. cit.*, p. 481-82.
25. The present Kulu Valley, Mandi and adjacent areas are known among the Tibetan speaking peoples of Western Himalayas by the collective name of Nyungti.
26. Kee Gompa, standing on a steep cliff, is situated in the centre of the Spiti Valley. It is a dGelugspa Monastery headed by the line of reincarnation of Guge Lo-tza-ba, Rin-chen dzang-po.
27. Cf. Y. Gergan, *op. cit.*, p. 497.
28. A *ghandola* is a kind of *dharma-dhvaja*, cylindrical in shape and with many auspicious signs and *mantras* engraved upon it in Devanāgarī, Lantza and Tibetan characters. It is fixed on the roof of a monastery, usually gilded and made of copper or brass, being one to three metres in height.
29. Cf. Y. Gergan, *op. cit.*, p. 497.
30. *Life and Works*, I, 71-75.
31. Cf. the present writer's article *Tsul-khrims Nyi-ma, the Great Reformer and Teacher of Ladakh* in the *Jagajjyoti*, Calcutta, 1976.
32. *Life and Works*, I, 60, 3ff.
33. G. Tucci, *Tibet, Land af Snows*, p. 41.

CHAPTER III

Life of Ngag-dbang Tse-ring

(i) Parentage and Childhood

The three mGon-lde brothers[1] were descendants of the first king of Tibet, gNya'-khri bTzan-po,[2] an 'incarnation' of Lord Avalokiteśvara. The eldest mGon-lde ruled Gu-ge (West Tibet), the second, Khri-lde, Mar-yul (Ladakh) and the youngest, gShegs-lde, sPu-rangs (also in West Tibet). The successors of the youngest king, gShegs-lde, extended their sphere of influence towards Spiti bordering on Zangskar. Sha-kya-thub, the first ruler of dPa'-gdumi,[3] was a descendant of gShegs-lde, the first ruler of sPu-rangs. Seng-ge-lde who succeeded his father, Lha-chen Sha-kya-thub of dPa'-gdum, invited his two uncles, the *lāmās* Rat-ne-mtsan and Nyi-me-tsan from Central Tibet, whom he offered the village of U-pa-rag, Brang-dkar, Skya-shi-rag and Go-bzi-phug as *mChod-gzhi*[4] for the maintenance of their monasteries. Lord Ang-gho-ra, the tutelary deity of Rat-ne-mtsan, once 'prophesied' that a boy would be born at U-pa-rag who in future would become a great supporter of his (Rat-ne-tsan's) lineage of the 'Brug-pa sect in Zangskar. Thereafter a boy 'with unique signs' was born at U-pa-rag, and Rat-ne-tsan named him Ang-gho-ra after his tutelary deity. Ang-gho-ra became a very efficient minister of King Tse-ring dPal-lde, who succeeded his father Seng-ge-lde. Of the seven children of Ang-gho-ra[5] the eldest son, Ngag-dbang rGya-mtso, studied under Gu-ge Lo-tza-ba[6] and became a great *yogī*. He, however, married and had four sons, who again were blessed with plenty of children. Thus the Ang-gho-ra clan went on expanding in Zangskar and finally all Zengskaris came to be regarded as descendants of the Ang-gho-ra clan, including the family into which the would-be Mahāsiddha Ngag-dbang Tse-ring was to be born.

The birthplace of Ngag-dbang Tse-ring is A-thing, a prosperous small village located at the foot of a mountain hallowed by Nāropa's Cave[7] near rDzong-khul[8] in Central Zangskar. In the fifth month of her pregnancy 'Phags-mo sGrol-ma, accompanied by Byang-chub-sems-dpa', her husband, went to rDzong-khul Monastery to have an audience with the Head Lama, Grub-chen Hor dPags-bsam dGe-'dun. The Grub-chen, on seeing 'Phags-mo sGrol-ma, understood that she was pregnant and made the following prophecy addressing himself to Byang-chub-sems-dpa': "Yes, yes, she will give birth to a son; take good care of the boy, lest he should contact a contagious disease, and let him (in due course of time) enter the monastic order, for this child will be a great benefactor of sentient beings. In future one of (the *lāmās*) belonging to my school will arrive (here); so when he (Ngag-dbang Tse-ring) will have reached the proper age, see to it that he be ordained a monk."[9]

It was in the evening of the fourteen day of the ninth lunar month in the Fire-Bird Year[10] that a son was born to 'Phags-mo sGrol-ma. When he was two years old, his mother, in a simple ceremony at home, gave him the name Ngag-dbang Tse-ring. Unfortunately, soon the happiness he had brought to his parents, turned into mourning, when Ngag-dbang Tse-ring's elder brother died during a dreadful epidemic that had broken out in the village. Unlike other children of his age in the village, Ngag-dbang Tse-ring received the best attention and love at home, specially from his grandfather. Due to this, at a tender age though, the child became somewhat snobbish, demanding better clothing, food and even ornaments. He behaved among his playmates as though he had been superior to them, always playing the role of a religious teacher only sitting on elevated seats prepared for him by his 'followers'. Sometimes he collected sheets of paper, bound them held between two flat pieces of wood and carried them on his back like a *lāmā* on his way to religious ceremonies in the village. The boy was also fond of *yogīs* and at times imitated them, telling people that he had renounced the world. Once two real *yogīs*, on their way to rDzong-khul, were lodged in his parents' house. This was a unique chance for him to try to obtain a ritual trumpet the *yogīs* were carrying with them. The latter, indeed, gave him the trumpet on the condition that he,

too, should become a *yogī*. The boy happily agreed and received the trumpet which he made use of even when he had become a real *yogī* himself.

(ii) Education and Training

In Higher Asia it has been customary for parents whose boys were meant to be sent to a monastery for ordination, to prepare their children for the life in a *gompa* (*dgon-pa* Monastery) and give them as good an elementary education as possible. Whereas other children learned from their parents at home how to read and write, Ngag-dbang Tse-ring's father Byang-chub, who seemed to be a simple illiterate peasant, sent his son to Lama Grub-pa bSod-nams at Shi-la-rtze for primary education. Ngag-dbang Tse-ring learned with tremendous speed.

Besides formal education parents had to see to it that their would-be novice sons were carefully made ready for what lay ahead of them, so that the boys could conveniently adjust themselves to the rigours of monastic life. Byang-chub, though unassuming and unsophisticated, certainly knew his task as a father as to how to make his son psychologically fit as well. Often he would give him maroon or yellow-coloured garments to wear, thus creating in him a liking for the *kāṣāya-vastra* as well as for persons who had donned the monastic robes. Ngag-dbang Tse-ring was an obedient son and, in his early age, always accompanied his father as though his shadow. Whenever there was a suitable occasion, the pious father would never forget to take his son along with him for an audience with any important *lāmā* who had come to Zangskar for a visit. The arrival of the great *lāmā* sTag-tsang Ngag-dbang mTso-skys rDo-rje,[11] the second 'incarnate' *lāmā* (*sprul-sku*) of Hemis Monastery[12] in Zangskar did not fail to leave a strong impression on the mind of the sensitive boy. A large number of devotees assembled at rDzong-khul, coming from adjacent areas and even from the remotest villages of Zangskar, to listen to the famous teacher from Central Ladakh. Ngag-dbang Tse-ring's own account of the memorial event may help us to appreciate to what extent his mind was affected by such a grandiose religious spectacle which took place near rDzong-khul:

"At the arrival of the incarnated *lāmā* (sTag-stang Ras-pa) big canopies had been suspended and hundreds of monks with

their leaders and retinue, all wearing *chos-gos-rnam-gsum*[13] flocked together as though (with their yellow robes trying to) eclipse the sun with his lustre. The whole congregation consisting of monks, members of the royal family of Zangskar, ministers, noblemen and the common people, had pitched their tents on the spacious pasture-land near rDzong-khul which looked so resplendent (as if) the heavenly bodies had come down to earth. At some distance musicians beat the *dha-man*[14] and played the *bsu-rna*[15] making the whole valley resound with their music. The gathering kept on increasing, while (the great teacher) gave his blessings to the audience, one by one, with his 'empowered staff'[16] ...My father and I, too, were fortunate enough to obtain (the Rinpoche's or *sprul-sku*'s) blessings... This was indeed the most wonderful religious pageantry (I) have ever seen."[17]

Certainly, witnessing such a grand ceremony must have made it all the more appealing for the boy to take orders so as, ultimately, to become a great teacher himself, which was exactly what his father, Byang-chub, was looking forward to.

During Ngag-dbang Tse-ring's early teens other events had their impact on his mind, more and more directing it towards the choice of a monk's career. The premature death of his mother and of a newly born younger brother, finally, made him firmly decide to renounce the world. He expressed his feelings in the following verses:

> "My beloved mother and younger brother in
> this life are no more,
> Dissolved like the evanescent hues of a
> rainbow in the sky;
> Such is the nature of all that exists; all
> without essence.
> I, the *no-no*,[18] shall go forth into homelessness,
> I, Ngag-dbang Tse-ring, shall embrace the
> religious life."[19]

The sudden death of his wife was a great shock for Byang-chub, especially because he had children still too young to look after themselves. According to the advice of his relatives and well-wishers, he married again in the hope that his second wife would be the best caretaker of those of his children who were still infants. After some time his second wife, too, gave birth

to some children and, as it so happens often enough, the stepmother turned hostile towards her foster-children. Ngag-dbang Tse-ring being the eldest son and the lawful heir of the family property, there was enough reason for the stepmother to direct her hostility particularly against him. The worst of it was that now his father was reduced to a mere shadow at home.

Notwithstanding his awkward position in the family, Byang-chub-sems-dpa' did not forget Lama Grub-chen Hor's prophecy and injunction that he as the boy's father should take good care of his son's education. Constantly obsessed with the idea of doing his paternal duty, he took Ngag-dbang Tse-ring to the learned *Me-me*[20] Kun-dga' at Brag-dkar for further studies and training. Byang-chub-sems-dpa' explained to the *Me-me* the future plans of his son. In no time the teacher had won the confidence of his promising pupil, whom he taught to the best of his ability. Besides reciting and explaining the texts, the *Me-me-le* would narrate many inspiring stories from the scriptures. He also made Ngag-dbang Tse-ring read the famous Mahāyāna text, the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, and introduced him to the grandeur of the Perfection of Wisdom as far as his pupil was able to grasp the subtleties of this religious classic. From Ngag-dbang Tse-ring's own words we learn that again he was confirmed in his decision to renounce the world and that he received the 'final push' to take ordination after having read the thirtieth chapter of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*,[21] which left an indelible imprint on him. Bearing in mind the character traits of the young would be Mahāsiddha, he must have been moved to tears when reciting the wonderful account of the career of Sadāprarudita, the Bodhisattva "who always sorrowed and pined away" in quest of Perfect Wisdom—"in such a way that he did not care for his body, had no regard for his life, and gain, honour and fame did not interest him."

When Ngag-dbang Tse-ring had reached the age of fourteen or so, both father and son decided to go to 'Bar-gdan Monastery to request its abbot, Lema gZim-dpon,[22] to ordain the latter novice and allow him to stay at 'Bar-gdan Gompa.[23] Upto the present day it is the custom that parents whose son is about to enter the *bhikṣu-saṃgha* make satisfactory offerings both to the abbot and other members of the monastic community. In order to conform to this custom and to make appropriate offerings

at the *gompa*, Byang-chub-sems-dpa' sold a part of the family property. This somewhat hasty action agitated the already smouldering anger of the stepmother. She quarrelled with her husband and argued that he had more children to be fed and that Ngag-dbang Tse-ring was not his only child. In her utter frustration and wrath she cursed her foster-son in a gathering of the villagers who, carrying *dkar-bcos*,[24] had assembled in front of their house to give Ngag-dbang a warm send off. She exclaimed: "Anything may happen to a human being but a curse upon one's having become a stepmother! Anything may sprout up from the soil but a curse upon the sprouting leaves of a poisonous plant! Any heavenly body may appear in the sky but the (calamitous) comet is a curse (to all)."[25] Ngag-dbang Tse-ring described his reaction to such an imprecation on the part of his stepmother thus: "After all, (I have) to be grateful to my stepmother for strengthening my hands to study and practise the Holy Dharma (in the monastery)."[26]

At 'Bar-gdan Monastery father and son were immediately granted an audience with Lama gZim-dpon. Byang-chub-sems-dpa' made his offerings, while Lama gZim-dpon accepted *skra-phud*[27] from Ngag-dbang Tse-ring, thereby agreeing to ordain him as a novice. Ngag-dbang studied for several years at 'Bargdan Gompa under a number of learned monks. In particular, to be prepared for his higher ordination, he had to acquaint himself with *vinaya* rules and to master the 'ordination procedure.'

Then, aged nineteen, Ngag-dbang Tse-ring in a party of forty-nine Zangskaris set out for Hemis Monastery in Central Ladakh to take higher ordination. There his long-cherished wish was fulfilled and he remarked: "(The *mKhan-po*[28] with his benevolent smile has made me a full-fledged monk) renaming me dKa'-brgyud Pad-ma. This makes me immensely happy. Having been ordained, I have come closer to the Buddha-Dharma; I am most lucky, indeed."[29]

(iii) His Gurus and Spiritual Career

After- having been ordained as a monk at Hemis Monastery, Ngag-dbang Tse-ring returned to Zangskar. There he under-went training in ritualism and studied the theoretical aspects of the Doctrine which was compulsory for every newly ordained

monk at his *gompa*. Nevertheless, his few years' experience in the monastery evoked in him a general feeling of disappointment, if not disgust. He was struck with the stagnation and futility of his mechanical way of life at 'Bar-gdan and drew the conclusion that mere rituals and theoretical studies would not yield any fruitful result, unless he applied himself to a concrete method of meditative practice leading to full realisation of the Ultimate Truth. With this idea in mind, he gave up his living in a monastery with all its conventions and little comforts, if any, in order to strive, singlemindedly, for insight-knowledge leading to Supreme Enlightenment. From now on he was determined to practise the Dharma in the same manner as his predecessors did, the *gurus* of the bKa'-brgyud-pa lineage, among whom the great Nāropa of Phullahari was the foremost *yogī*. "In the history of Tibetan Buddhism, the Indian Nāropa (1016-1100) occupies a unique position. To the present day, his life is held up as an example to anyone who aspires after spiritual values, which one never realized the easy way but only after years of endless toil and perseverance."[30]

This celebrated philosopher Nāropa, abbot of the monastic university of Nālandā, had been engaged in intellectual activities till the vision of an old ugly woman revealed to him the utter fruitlessness of merely scholastic pursuits. She lamented Nāropa's spiritual stalemate, his being totally indifferent to real Dharma-practice, to *yoga*, meditation and realization, the true *modus vivendi* and final goal of an ordained person. The vision proved a turning-point in Nāropa's life; he left Nālandā, met Tillopā and underwent twelve years of most rigorous training under his stern *guru* till the latter's death.

On the authority of Tibetan tradition, the originator of the bKa'-brgyud School, first introduced into Tibet by Mar-pa (1012-96), was Nāropa and his spiritual teacher Tillopā (988-1069). In fact, according to the list of the "eighty-four Indian *siddhas*" as given in L.M. Joshi's *Studies in the Buddhistic Culture of India*, p. 452, Nāropa (Naḍapāda) occupies the twentieth place and Tillopā (Tailikapāda) the twenty-second respectively. But L.M. Joshi declares that "the whole problem of the history and chronology of the eighty-four *siddhas* (Perfect Ones) is a confused and complex one."[31] As for the Indian origins of the bKa'-brgyud, lineage, D.L. Snellgrove says: "With

Tārānātha we may follow the succession through Kāṇha to Bhadrapāda... he in turn gave instruction to Tillopā, who, as is well-known, was the master of Nāropa... the connecting link with the Tibetan line"[32] of the bKa'-brgyud-pas. Fairly detailed information about the lives of the great bKa'-brgyud-pa *gurus* like that of Mar-pa, Mi-la Ras-pa and sGam-po-pa is already available in English and need not be repeated here. But next to nothing has been said about the lives and literary activities of a considerable number of other bKa'-brgyud masters of fame, e.g., about the founders of the 'Brug-pa School; this is one of the sub-sects of the bKa'-brgyud-pa Order with which we are concerned here, because Ngag-dbang Tse-ring belonged to it. In the following pages we have to try to gather more information about some of those teachers who succeeded sGam-po-pa.

Mar-pa was the spiritual head of the bKa'-brgyud School who, having returned to Tibet from India, orally transmitted the 'pith-instructions' of Nāropa's esoteric teachings to his spiritual son Mi-la Ras-pa (1040-1123). rJe Mi-la, in turn, handed down the same to sGam-po-pa, his 'heart-son' in the Dharma.

The three greatest of sGam-po-pa's immediate successors were Lama Phag-mo-gru (1110-70), Dus-gsum mKhyen-pa (1110-93) and sGom-pa (1116-69); they and other direct disciples of his established no less than six important schools, all based on his teachings. They are the (1) Phag-mo-gru-pa. (2) Kar-ma-pa; (3) mTsal-pa, (4) sTag-lung-pa, (5) Bri-khung-pa and (6) 'Brug-pa Schools. In spite of such lines of division, as D.L. Snellgrove says, "There were no essential differences in doctrine between all these various orders. Their main differences consisted in their traditional attachments to different lines of teachers and particular tutelary divinities."[33]

Mar-pa had prophesied that in future his lineage of the bKa'-brgyud Order "will be more accomplished than the parents."[34] gLing Ras-pa, known as the Tibetan Sarahapāda[35] was, in accordance with the prophecy, an infant prodigy and later on became the founder of the 'Brug-pa sect, which subsequently emerged as one of the most influential sects of the bKa'-brgyud Order in Tibet. Reference has been made to the founder of this particular school in *A Cultural History of Tibet* and also in *Mk'yen Brtse's Guide to the Holy Places of Central Tibet* thus:

'The 'Brug-pa, based on the monastery of Rva-lung was founded by gLing Ras-pa about 1180;"[36] and "gLing Ras-pa, at first a bKa'-brgyud-pa, studied in Lo-ro and at Phag-mo-gru. (In Tibet often a locality or *gompa* was named after a famous *lāmā* and vice-versa (present writer's brackets)). Then he became the founder of the 'Brug-pa sect, today dominant in Bhutan and partly also in Laḍakh."[37]

The chief disciple of Phag-mo-gru was rJe-btzun gLing Ras-pa Padma rDo-rje, born in 1129. A brilliant boy, he became already in his childhood well versed in many fields of learning, including medicine. He had numerous teachers; but his first contact with dPal Phag-mo-gru proved a cataclysmic experience. The noteworthy account of gLing Ras-pa's meeting with his *guru* Phag-mo-gru underlines the significance of one's faith in his *guru* and of the Tibetan dictum that "the names of millions of Buddhas could never be known without a *lāmā*-teacher,"[38] or that "faith alone has the power of turning a dog's tooth into the Buddha's relic."[39] Endowed with such firm faith in his *guru*, gLing Ras-pa became, all of a sudden, fully enlightened. He describes his experience thus: "By the mere hearing of the name of Phag-mo-gru my hair stood on end. I yearned for an audience with him, betook myself to his presence and behold—'the lord of all sentient beings!' He was the Buddha himself; even the trees and other objects near him assumed an aura of great sanctity. It was here that all my wrong views ceased and I awakened to Absolute Truth. I realized the unreality of all manifestations, and my apparent defilements were completely washed away. The world of phenomena had become crystal-clear and stainless; with the opening of the 'wisdom-eye' (*prajñācakṣu*) I at once grasped all the teachings of the Buddha. In order to strengthen this realization, I promised my *guru* to go into retreat for seven years, seven months and seven days. After five days of continual practice, I won the Highest Enlightenment and the continuation of my meditation seemed irrelevant. But my *guru* Phag-mo-gru asked wonderingly:'How is it that you have broken your promise regarding those seven years, months and days?' 'According to your instructions,' I replied. 'I have meditated on the meaning of Ultimate Reality and now, since I have become one with Absolute Truth, there is nothing more to be contemplated upon

in retreat.' Lama Phag-mo-gru was pleased and acknowledged: 'Where the Indian Gaṅgā flows, Sarahapāda was the greatest *yogī*; but to the north of it, it's you who is the foremost meditator."[40]

Another prominent teacher, the second master of the 'Brug-pa School, was gTzang-pa rGya-ras Ye-shes rDo-rje (1161-1211), gLing Ras-pa's disciple. Of all the teachers of this school, he was chiefly responsible for the expansion of his sect in Tibet and neighbouring countries. This 'Brug-pa sect, originated by his teacher, gLing Ras-pa, was named after a monastery, which later on he, gTzang-pa rGya-ras, himself had founded. An ascetic teacher, he also was a great traveller. Once, on his way to rTze-bo-la, "he saw nine dragons flying in the sky causing mighty thundering. gTzang-pa rGya-ras took this thunder as an auspicious sign and named his monastery 'Brug,' 'dragon' (not very far from Lhasa, south-west of it) (present writer's brackets). Since that time this sub-sect of the bKa'-brgyud Order has been referred to as 'Brug-pa bKa'-brgyud. In the very year of founding Dragon Monastery about one thousand small hermitages were built, covering the mountains near the monastery. Regular monastic schedules for the hermits were framed, and at one time fifty thousand disciples of gTzang-pa rGya-ras assembled there. Before his death at the age of fifty, gTzang-pa rGya-ras instructed his disciples that they should travel in all directions for the sake of propagating the doctrine of the 'Brug-pa School."[41] Subsequently, this sect flourished considerably and spread as far as a vulture can fly within eighteen days.[42]

rGod-tsang-pa mGon-bo dPal (1189-1258) of Lho-brag was one of the main disciples of gTzang-pa rGya-ras. Before meeting his teacher, four wandering minstrels happened to come to his native village, singing the following verses: "The Chos-rje rGya-ras of Rva-lung holds a fruit, bestowing bliss for the present life and for the next...and anchorite intent on practising the Holy Dharma, should go to Rva-lung, a dedicated and determined person must go to him!"[43]

rGod-tsang-pa took the hint seriously and left his home in order to study and practise under the teacher recommended by the bards. He received instructions both at Rva-lung and at 'Brug Monastery and took ordination from gTzang-pa rGya-ras.

Like the latter, rGod-tsang-pa was an intrepid traveller. In *Mk'yen Brtse's Guide to the Holy Places of Central Tibet* (p. 154) we find the following information: "rGod-tsang-pa was active in many regions and above all in Lho-stod, where he founded several monasteries." This region of Lho-stod, 'southern highland,' clearly is a reference to mNga'-ris sKhor-gsum, the old kingdom in the Western Himālayas. Even nowadays several caves and hermitages are found in Central Ladakh and Lahul, named after rGod-tsang-pa, who had hallowed those places with his presence. More than a dozen hermit-monks are still keeping the tradition of this great mystic at the hermitage called rGod-tsang, high up in the mountains about three kilometres south-west of Hemis Gompa. In Lahul there is rGod-tsang-pa's Cave, now situated in the midst of a monastery known as Lama Gompa, clearly visible from Kyelang and about half an hour's walk south of dKar-mdangs Monastery. On top of the holy Mount Dril-bu-ri, one of the most sacred spots of Lahul, there is another cave where rGod-tsang-pa had stayed.

"mGon-bo dPal, alias rGod-tsang-pa, derived his name from *rgod-tsang*, 'vulture's nest.' Once, when still in quest of final Enlightenment, he was undergoing a very rigorous meditation-course, having gone for retreat to a high altitude cave in which a vulture had built its nest. In order to inspire himself, he declared : 'I, a human being, you, a bird, and a rocky cave —we three must become one, bearing one and the same name; if Oneness cannot be achieved, this mountain will be known as 'Mountain of Failure!' In due course of time he did achieve what was to be achieved and realized Oneness with Ultimate Truth. Since then he has been known as rGod-tsang-pa."[44]

In his writings Ngag-dbang Tse-ring has quoted the 'Saint of the Vulture's Nest,' who succinctly tells us about the 'drastic ways' of a true *yogī* (*rnal-'byor-pa*), about his fewness of possessions and fewness of wishes, conducive to the realisation of what is beyond the ken of the ordinary worldling: "A thorny walking-stick, hateful to the enemy, the skull-cup, loathsome to a guest, all objects which worldly beings detest and spurn— these three are the most essential requisites of a *rnal-'byor-pa*."[45]

The pilgrimage of rGod-tsang-pa to Jālandhara and

subsequently to mNga'-ris had already resulted in the propagation of 'Burg-pa tenets and tradition in these West Himālayan regions. The visit of another prominent teacher of the 'Brug-pa Order from Tibet to mNga'-ris further strengthened the position of the 'Brug-pa sect in these areas. It was sTag-tsang Ras-pa, who also visited Ladakh in 1567 at the invitation of the Ladakhi king 'Jam-dbyang rNam-rgyal. Later on sTag-tsang Ras-pa was made *rāja-guru* of King Seng-ge rNam-rgyal, the most influential king in Ladakhi history, noted for his devotion to the Dharma. In his translation of the *Chronicles of Ladakh,* A.H. Francke gives the following flattering remark referring to the king and his *guru* : "In the whole world, is there a king like Seng-ge (lion) or a *lāmā* like sTag (tiger)?" sTag-tsang Ras-pa being the founder of Hemis Monastery, his teachings and legacy have, ever since, carefully been preserved in Ladakh just like those of Kun-mkhyen Padma dKar-po in Bhutan.

"Padma dKar-po was born in Tibet, entered Bhutan during the 17th century A.D. as a religious teacher and established what is now the predominant form of Buddhism in Bhutan, known as the Southern Branch of the bKa'-brgyud-pa School, of which Mar-pa and his illustrious successor Mi-la Ras-pa were the founders in Tibet about five centuries earlier."[46] "Today Padma dKar-po is the chief authority concerning the Tāntric lore of the bka'-brgyud-pa School. His writings comprise standard works on astrology, medicine, grammar, history, rituals, art, philosophy, metaphysics, and occultism. He is credited with having compiled and edited some fifty-two to fifty-eight volumes...He was a contemporary of the Fifth Dalai Lama, who died in the year 1680."[47]

It is not known so far whether the persecution of members of the unreformed sects (Red Hats) in Tibet by the Mongols in the late sixteenth, seventeenth and the first quarter of the eighteenth centuries was the real cause behind sTag-tsang Ras-pa's and Kun-mkhyen Padma dKar-po's visits to Ladakh and Bhutan respectively. But as regards Ngag-dbang Tse-ring's *guru*, Lama Rang-rig, we learn from a dialogue between Lama Rang-rig and Ngag-dbang Tse-ring that the former had to flee from Tibet to mNga'-ris because of continual harassment at the hands of Mongols. The *guru* says to Ngag-dbang Tse-ring :

"...As far as dBus and gTzang are concerned...the situation has worsened so much so that, whereas hermits can put up with the (most inhospitable) mountains, the mountains themselves cannot suffer the hermits (being terrorised by Mongols and robbers)."

As Lama Rang-rig was the most distinguished master of the 'Brug-pa bKa'-brgyud Order of his time, Ngag-dbang Tse-ring revered him as his ideal spiritual teacher even before having actually met him. Frequently the would-be disciple used to invoke the blessings of Master Rang-rig, while performing *guru-pūjā* :

"With a heavy heart, at your feet, directing
the mind towards his father-*guru*,
This beggar sings, with folded hands, a song
with deep emotion in your honour, exalted sage.
Behold with your all-compassionate eyes this
humble (disciple of yours);
With deep faith I pray the holy *lāmā* for his blessing."[48]

According to the manuscript, there is also a response to Ngag-dbang Tse-ring's fervent prayers. Master Rang-rig, it is said, appears in Ngag-dbang's dreams and admonishes his would-be disciple to practise ardently in solitude, to be faithful to the bKa-'brgyud tradition, after having referred to his own career in brief. The Grub-chen's verses actually give the impression of his narrating 'real dreams' whose contents are a medley of facts (perhaps those pieces of information which the *śiṣya* could find out about the life of the man whom he was looking forward to as his ideal *guru*) and his persistent longings to meet the 'father-*guru*', whom he knows to be far away. The dream-contents also indicate Ngag-dbang's frustration to some extent—there seem to be no signs of his wishes coming true; his worries and fears find their expression in the state of dreaming; when Rang-rig is referring to his death and even to that of his future disciple. Instead of giving any further dream-interpretation in a psycho-analytical manner, the Grub-chen's own words may be allowed to speak for themselves. (The Mahāsiddha's *guru* appearing to his disciple in a dream:)

"You fortunate and well-endowed (disciple),
listen to me!
The fact that you and I have met and stay
together, is due to our
Stock of merit previously acquired and the
outcome of sincere prayers offered.
(As for me), I was born at Rang-rig in Spiti,
Nurtured in dBus and gTzang (in Central Tibet);
I meditated near Turquoise Lake of Tsa-ri and
Became proficient in practice, realizing
insight-knowledge.
All hustle and bustle of this world I have
completely left behind.
At present, O-rgyan[49] is my abode, after having
left my earthly
Frame at Nālandā, uncertain (still) where (I should)
be born again.[50]
..."O my young disciple of noble birth, are you
keeping well?
As for your 'birth-place,' (practise) to be
'reborn' in the realm of Emptiness
See to it that you will be 'nurtured' in the
mountains' solitude of detachment;
Then your meditation will lead to insight-knowledge
Enlightenment.
When proficient in your practice, (constantly)
guard the life force of your realisation.
Thus carry on your devotions until you breathe
your last.
My way of doing was just like this. And you,
too, follow the same path
So that, when your life will have come to an end,
simultaneously,
Both of us shall attain to Buddhahood."[51]

At long last Ngag-dbang Tse-ring's wishes were fulfilled, when Lama Rang-rig came in person, all the way from Central Tibet, to visit Zangskar some time in the first half of the eighteenth century. Never had Ngag-dbang Tse-ring had such an occasion to have his doubts resolved regarding suitable

places for and methods of meditation or so recondite a matter as training and taming the mind. Some of Lama Rang-rig's instructions and observations were written down by his *śiṣya* whom the *guru* advises thus:

"Whenever hindrances stand in your way or doubts arise, you should always consult your teacher. Having set out with a keen desire for insight-knowledge, meditate in a solitary hermitage at any place. If Tibet does not suit you, proceed to Mon (cis-Himālayan regions); if you feel disturbed in Mon, go to Tibet as you like. However, having worked for the welfare of others, one's achievements for the sake of a hundred beings in dBus and gTzang do not count as much as preaching the Dharma to a single person in a country which is without the Dharma. Again, as I have said before, all existential constituents (*dharmas*) originate in one's own mind Mind by its very nature is space-like. Free from grasping (in terms of 'I' and 'mine'), it is essentially pure and bright, emptiness *per se*, manifesting itself without impediments. Whatever phenomenon may arise, resembling a rainbow in the sky, unbelievably multifarious—all of them are so many projections conjured up by one's own mind. Upon close scrutiny (all *dharmas* at the level of Ultimate Truth) are without characteristics, intrinsically pure, void and, as it were, free (though bondage never applied to them)."[52]

Ngag-dbang Tse-ring was deeply impressed by Lama Rang-rig's teachings which he really took to heart. Greatly inspired he immediately went into retreat and practised meditation in all earnestness. Somewhat resembling Mi-la Ras-pa, the future Mahāsiddha would often express himself through songs or hymns (though we do not know whether he actually sang his *dohās* extempore like rJe Mi-la), thus describing his feelings and states of mind:

" 'Tis rare, indeed, to be born into a good family,
To be associated with the (holy) lineage (of
one's *guru*);
For does one always meet with such favourable
circumstances?
So, what a fool (am I), the *yogī*, if (I) do
not devote
Myself to the practice of the precious Dharma,

Being offered, though, a unique chance through
birth and lineage.
O *yogī*, put at once the Holy Teaching into
practice;
Transcend, O *yogī*, mere theory, smart talk and
smart thought;
Well-endowed that you are, on *mahāmudrā* you
should meditate.
Let (your mind) be vast like space and embrace
the essence of the Mahāyāna doctrine;
O bKa'-brgyud-pa, tread the 'immediate path'
of gnosis!"[54]

For practically every *yogī* the way to the Highest Enlightenment is a thorny one, with so many ups and downs, deserts of tedium and frustration, of self-complacency and conceit which all have to be traversed on the razor-edge path leading to the City of Nirvāṇa. It goes without saying that only a small number of aspirants manage to negotiate those deserts and finally reach their ultimate goal. Thanks to his stock of merit and benign guidance on the part of his *guru*; Ngag-dbang Tse-ring is wide awake in the face of danger so that at last he succeeds in overcoming all obstacles. Having detected some sort of stagnation in his practice, he is not slow in upbraiding himself :

"O you absent-minded recluse, listen :
Do you know what I mean, Vāgīśvara Dīrghāyu ?[55]
Your outer appearance is that of a *siddha*
But still you are entangled in the fetters of doubts.[56]
All your prolonged meditations in solitude are to no avail
so far.
When, under extreme circumstances, put to the test,
You would certainly have to repent,"[56]
"To study (meditation) without any insight,
Knowing nothing but perfunctory things
This would prove fruitless in time of need.
Therefore contemplate so that the 'Supreme Meaning'
(*paramārtha*)
May fully reveal itself."[57]

The time came for Ngag-dbang Tse-ring to approach the *bodhimaṇḍa*, the Seat of Enlightenment, just like Śākyamuni Buddha some two thousand two hundred and eighty years before him. First the Grub-chen performs *guru-pūjā* ;

"Obeisance to all *gurus*!
I bow down at the feet of my incomparable father-*guru*;
Pray bless this beggar (like disciple of yours) lest he
Should ever forsake his hermitage;
Take pity on me (so that thanks to your blessing)
On my way all obstacles may be overcome."[58]

Then Ngag-dhang Tse-ring is about to realize the final release of his mind:

"In (the hermitage) one's mind gets deeply absorbed
In meditation and more pacified...
I have become proficient in applying both skill in means
and wisdom,
Having devoted myself to right views, contemplation and
right practice.
The range of right views has merged in infinitude;
Contemplation has culminated in the blissful gnosis of
non-duality;
And whatever action I perform, it has become
(a source of spiritual strength and happiness.)"[59]

Having defeated Māra and become one with the Absolute (*tathatā*), like all great sages, fully emancipated and entirely fearless, Ngag-dbang Tse-ring 'roars his Lion's Roar':

"The true nature of *mahāmudrā* manifests itself as the way
(of enlightened action),
A veritable wish-fulfilling (tree) of *kāmadhenu*.
The outcome of (such action) will be unbelievably fruitful,
A priceless jewel granting all beings' wishes.
When one matures within and sees the mind in its pristine
purity,
This results in the (realisation of) *mahāmudrā*.[60]
Experiencing these three—the basis, the path and fruition.[61]

Forms the sole wealth of the *siddhas*; such understanding.
Having arisen in my mind, I, Vāgīśvara, set it
Herewithforth (for the benefit of all)—*evaṃ*!"[62]

Having 'roared his Lion's Roar' in the blissful experience of Great Awakening, the Mahāsiddha sings his song of supramundane triumph:

"In his hermitage there lives the *yogī* who has left behind
all worldly affairs;
In his vision of truth serene and at peace, solitude has
become his best companion.[63]
Whatever apparitions may be conjured up, demoniacal,
he fears them not!
To be, since long, accustomed to live in retreat.
This is the heroic nature of the *yogī*."[64]

(iv) Ngag-dbang Tse-ring's Pilgrimages

While still in search of spiritual realization and in keeping up pious tradition, Grub-chen Ngag-dbang Tse-ring undertook arduous pilgrimages to places mostly situated in the Western Himālayas or in the foothills south of them. He went to the famous shrine of Triloknāth (known in Tibetan as Gar-zha'i 'Phags-pa) in Chamba State, toured the Punghee Valley and visited Lahul (Gar-zha) as many as three times. He ventured further south, trekking through the Kulu and Kangra Valleys. As a *rnal-'byor-pa* (*yogī*) he had a special preference, it seems, for cemeteries to stay at. In such charnel grounds he practised meditation for a considerable time, seeking to intensify his sense of complete renunciation and deepen his mystical experiences. As contrasted with Lahul or Chamba, at the Mahāsiddha's time, in the foothills as everywhere else in North-Western India, all that had remained of Buddhist establishments such as monasteries or shrines were but faint reminiscences. The Grub-chen describes many a holy place utterly in ruins or taken over by the *tīrthikas* and converted into sanctuaries of Mahādeva. The tone of his narrative is surprisingly sober and objective, betraying his detachment with regard to all outer things, gross or subtle.

Whereas many localities visited by Grub-chen Ngag-dbang

Tse-ring on his pilgrimages cannot be identified with accuracy, the identity of holy places in Lahul is established beyond any doubt. This is due to the fact that till nowadays many Lahulis have remained Buddhists and devout followers, mostly of the spiritual tradition to which the Mahāsiddha belonged, i.e., to the 'Brug-pa bKa'-brgyud School. The latter had come to Lahul to pay homage at the numerous hermitages, often associated with the name of the Mahāsiddha rGod-tsang-pa, whom the Zangskari saint had held in great esteem. The centre of Lahul, as it were, is the holy Ghaṇṭā-giri or Dril-bu-ri, east of the village of Kyelang, studded with lamaseries, even nowadays occupied by *yogīs* and *yoginīs*. Just as Grub-chen Ngag-dbang Tse-ring had circumambulated Dril-bu-ri, a *bskor-ba* (circumambulation as a meritorious act of veneration) of the holy mount, up to the present day, is a *sine qua non* for every pilgrim coming to Lahul. In the following is given a hymn composed by the Mahāsiddha in honour of the sacred spot :

"Mount '*Vajra-Ghaṇṭā*—Wisdom-and-Means"
    (*prajñā* and *upāya*)
Is the blessed; holy home of Lord Heruka,
    gods and the place where (*sura*) and angels
    (*ḍākinī*) meet and,
Devotees practise the two ways of gaining knowledge
    (*jñāna*) and merit (*puṇya*)
For the worldling this mountain is a place of purification
To rid himself of two fold obscurations
    (*jñeyāvaraṇa* and *kleśāvaraṇa*)[65]
This spot is (ideal) for contemplatives to devote themselves
To introspection and make progress; whereas the hypocrites
Are here (exposed and) rejected (like chaff) in the wind
High up (on the peaks) are floating clouds coming from
The south, accompanied by a cool incessant drizzle.
Here is the place where one's intellect is sharpened.
And all impurities[66] are wiped out; a place, where
Contemplation (increases) and (in due course of time)
    realization is achieved.
To the left and right (on the slopes) grow herbs and flowers.
In front (of me where I am sitting) I prepare
    a *maṇḍala*-offering,

Just in the centre of the (mountainous)
Region bounded by three valleys forming a
Triangle[67]—the sphere of the (true) Dharma arising (within).
The ranges to my right resemble a heap of jewels.
The menacing icy giants to the left appear like
The furious 'king of wrathful (deities)'; the
Summit in front gives the impression of a stack
Of holy books, and the mountains behind look
Like a majestically crouching snow-lion.
Such is the Dril-bu-ri, holy and blessed,
'Abode of Emptiness,' where saints of yore resided,
And also a retreat for future hermits, good to stay at.
This mountain-*stūpa*, (thus) *thrice* (endowed) is the
Residence of *ḍākinis*, the sublime stay of anchorites
Accomplishing their highest aim. May (this mountain)
Always remain a source of inspiration for all sentient
Being (to practise the Dharma with diligence)!'[68]

(v) Propagation of Dharma

Ngag-dbang Tse-ring, whose life itself is a lofty example of his preachings put into practice, had always made a point of sticking to his teacher Lama Rang-rig's advice that "whether (in search of Enlightment) one goes on pilgrimage to India (or not)—the (real) Dharma has to be practised (within) oneself."[69] The Grub-chen constantly sought the solitude of hermitages high up in the mountains where he practised and preached the Doctrine, without giving heed to public invitations but in a few exceptional cases. Like his exalted predecessor Mi-la Ras-pa, Ngag-dbang-Tse-ring justified his stay in retreat as being the highest kind of service both to the Buddha-śāsana and to all living beings. From his biography and *mGur* (hymns) it seems evident that all his preachings were written down while he was staying at rDzong-khul and other hermitages. The bulk of his teachings and works cannot be accommodated in this chapter on 'Propagation of Dharma' here we record only a specimen of the Mahāsiddha's literary work through which he sought to propagate the Dharma.

At the beginning of his *mGur* (vol. II of the manuscript—reproduction) Ngag-dbang Tse-ring gives, not without a touch of humour, an interesting vindicatory explanation regarding his

literary activities as an anchorite. He first invokes the authority of the Tantras and Sūtras even (though this latter *ex cathedra* passage does not seem to be extant in any classical Indian language) so as to justify a recluse's 'singing and dancing': "*The rGyud-kyi rgyal-po dpal-brtag gnyis* has it that—(the *yogīs*') singing a song and performing a dance is justified, (because) singing is a sign of perfection in Tantra, and dancing is a sign of perfection in meditation; (therefore), it is customary for *yogīs* to sing and to dance."[70]

Ngag-dbang Tse-ring explains that the purpose of his teachings through songs and poetry is to tame the most untamable mind and to point out the right path leading to enlightenment and liberation from all bondage. To corroborate his statement, he quotes from the *Sangs-rgyas 'dus-pa rin-po-che tog-gi mdo:* "Once four *śrāvaka-arhats*, the holy Sāriputra and other 'heart-sons' (of the Buddha) set out for alms in each direction of Rājagṛha city. At the four city-gates each of the saints beheld many phantoms created by Māra, the Evil One, which began to tease them: 'Sing, monks! O monks, dance!' In reply the *arhats* assured them: 'Comrades, we shall sing you a song which has never been sung by anyone, and we shall perform a dance as has never been witnessed here on earth.' Then by dint of the voice of the Dharma the Evil One was brought to terms, underwent spiritual training—and won Final Release."[71]

Although dancing and singing (*nācca-gīta*) are against the ten precepts of a Buddhist monk, the Vajrayāna *siddhas* perhaps sang their songs (*dohās*) which are called Vajra-songs (*vajragīti*). The Tantras describe scenes of dancing and singing by *yogīs* and *yoginīs*. Thus our Mahāsiddha was following an old tradition current among earlier *siddhas*.

Whereas Ngag-dbang Tse-ring's preference for solitary hermitages in rocky wilderness reminds us of the ascetic life-pattern of the members of the earliest *saṃgha* at the time of Śākyamuni Buddha, the Grub-chen's missionary zeal is certainly inspired by the ideals of a Bodhisattva's career as extolled in the Mahāyāna scriptures. The Mahāsiddha's introvertive and extrovertive character-traits seem to be harmoniously blended. The welfare of 'all living beings' is definitely his heart's concern when he says, solemnly calling on the 'ancient worthies':

"As for the sages and seers of yore, *tapas* was their (daily) practice which they heartily embraced, humble and unassuming in their outer appearance, clad in robes all in tatters; their jewellery they were within, in their minds, indifferent to (outward) indigence regarding food and clothing, or to ridicule. Nurtured as the sons of mountain-solitude, they dressed in clouds and mist and put on as hats deserted caves. Being totally unconcerned with the ways of this world, its (so-called) happiness and fulfilment, they always contemplated impermanence to create a sense of urgency and thus to make the best use of their life-time. Meditation on the omnipresence of death served as their pillow, while they wrapped themselves up in the cloth of being mindful of the law of *karma*. The mats which they spread was their being aware of the disadvantages of *samsāric* existence which they likened to a whirlpool or a tapering flame. Concentrating all the time on the essence of their (the ancient worthies) accomplishments and with a clear perception of their aims and gains through Dharma-practice in accordance with facts, as skill in means some hymns have come (to my mind). In the form of songs I shall now set forth the message of all the Jinas of past, present and future with a view to guiding well-endowed devotees: to inspire the rich to make merit and to admonish those lucky enough (to hear the Dharma) to win omniscience and Final Release...[72]

"...I sing my songs in order to induce kings to rule over their subjects in consonance with the ten virtues; for the sake of the lowly, so that each of them according to his capacity may rejoice in the Dharma; for the sake of pointing to our venerable teachers and their discourses, to the Tantras, Śāstras and all teachings of the saints; for the sake of earnest meditators so that they may realize perfect tranquillity (*samatha*) and supramundane insight (*vipaśyanā*); for the sake of those *yogīs* with clear perception so that they be endowed with supreme vision, meditation, action and fruition; in the interest of occultists so that in the realm of the Dharma they get the better of their enemy, ego-clinging regarding (their employing) charms to exercise ferocious deities—in themselves void and without substance. I compose my hymns so as to make the followers of Bon forget their aberrations and perverted views in order to share the blessings of the Holy Dharma; for the sake of doctors

suffering from (the ill effects of) the five poisons (lust, anger delusion, jealousy and conceit) so that they get cured thanks to the prescription of the 'Nectar of Insight-knowledge; in the interest of traders so that instead of their present profiteering they gain, through their making merit, even greater profit for their next life; I bear in mind the youngsters, so that they may overcome their (real) enemy—the mental defilements—defending themselves with the sharp weapon of wisdom, while wearing the garment of compassion; the songs are meant for young men and women, unmindful of the Dharma and frittering away their time so that instead of sensual objects they may think of the Triple Gem and the Lama teaching them the Doctrine, and that instead of (love-songs) they may like to hear the Holy Dharma which may lead them to (genuine) happiness of the City of Emancipation and bestow on them the seven jewels of sainthood; the hymns are for the guidance of the aged when they are on the threshold of death; for the entertainment of children who, playful as they are, will find the (references to) dreams and jugglery to their liking: for the inspiration of the multitude of fortunate, faithful students of the Dharma, in order to understand the full meaning of the unique occasion of being born a man, of the inevitability of death, of the law...*karma*—cause and effect, of the unsatisfactory nature of *saṃsāra* and the advantages of winning Final Release."[73]

Though Ngag-dbang Tse-ring linked to stay in lonely hermitages far away from the 'madding crowd,' this does not mean that he always stayed at one and the same place. In fact, he also seemed to have appreciated the life of a homeless traveller; for he says : "He whose mind is detached regarding his fatherland, feels happy and at home wherever he goes; and as no anchorite has good reason to feel attached to an alien environment either, he moves freely and happily in all directions, from hermitage to hermitage."[74]

On his pilgrimage to Triloknāth in the Chamba Valley, Ngag-dbang Tse-ring was invited by a *brāhmaṇa* at a place called Tsa-nga-khar near the small township of Paldar. There he preached the Buddha's teaching about the law of *karma*, the importance of human life, the inevitability of death, etc., to the local *brāhmaṇas*, who became unusually faithful followers of

the Doctrine. The Grub-chen was quite impressed by them and declared : "Oh! when considering the Buddha-nature in each of us, there is no distinction between male and female; the differences between Bod-pas (Tibetans) and Mon-pas (Cis-Himalayans) are only on the surface. (No doubt) the Buddha-*śāsana* illumines Tibet (like the sun); but if we think in terms of cause and effect, there is no lack of appreciating (the Dharma) here in Mon either."[75]

Frequently Ngag-dbang Tse-ring recommended the recitation of the six-syllabled *mantra om-maṇi-padme-hūṃ*. This *mantra*, as is well known, is most widely chanted throughout the areas of or influenced by Tibetan Buddhist tradition—even to the present day. In such areas so many *maṇi* walls used to be erected from time to time, crowned with innumerable stone-slabs with this six-syllabled *mantra* in Lantza or Tibetan characters engraved upon them. Instead of conventional forms of punishment previous Ladakhi kings made prisoners construct *maṇi*-walls, prominent rocks and boulders by the wayside, at important crossroads, etc., were carved with these six syllables, often painted in various colours. When addressing devotees, Ngag-dbang Tse-ring would advise them to 'hold' the holy *mantra* on all occasions, thus :

"Recite this *mantra* of six syllables aloud, repeatedly and with single-mindedness; recite (mentally) while eating so that the bodily function be (accompanied by the wholesome mental) attitude of making an offering; recite while walking so that every step be a step of reverential circumambulation; recite *oṃ-maṇi-padme-hūṃ* while going to sleep so that obtuseness be converted into brightness; sometimes you should recite in a singing voice so that the mind does not stray in the fog of distractions; sometimes just whisper so that all dualistic tendencies be dissolved; at times articulate the *mantra* rhythmically in an undulating voice so as to abstain from gossiping; on (special) occasions recite by way of roaring a lion's roar in order to check excessive laughter; or you may intone the *mantra* like (a dancer), dancing while reciting; this will be helpful to keep you in good health; 'hold' it when sitting in meditation in order to realize tranquillity of mind."[76]

Excessive consumption of and addiction to *chang* (Tibetan beer) has always been the major vice found among peoples of

the Himālayan regions and particularly among the Zangskaris. In his preachings Ngag-dbang Tse-ring exhorts his countrymen again and again to exercise restraint in their drinking habits. Quoting from *U-rgyan Padma* and *mGon-po zla-'od gzhon-nu*, he warns his listeners: "Intoxicant *chang*, blue in colour, improper meat of various hues and the deceptive age of maidenly girls—these are the three poisons for the students of the Dharma, which they should give up, once for all.[77] ...He who does not know how to set measures to his drinking *chang* and oversteps due limits invites all kinds of diseases to befall him. Already having poisoned his body with excessive drink, how could he expect to be cured by a doctor? (Therefore, if one has to) drink *chang* at all, one should know where to stop."[78]

As in all cold countries, especially where there is serious shortage of fuel, many people in Central Asia regard alcoholic beverages as a kind of medicine essential to endure the harshness of the climate. According to the five fundamental rules of ethics (*pañca-śīla*) in Buddhism, which hails from a tropical country, a Buddhist is not supposed to partake of any kind of intoxicants. Human weakness, however, but, no doubt also the exigencies due to climatic inclemency caused the fifth *śīla* to be circumvented in a way. Bearing in mind the age old beer-drinking habits of his country-men, Ngag-dbang Tse-ring had to make allowances and did not, like a fanatic puritan, categorically condemn *chang*. Instead he objectively pointed out all inherent dangers and cautioned his audience against any excess: "From excess you should refrain, paying heed to your physical well-being. If you know contentment, (*chang*) will turn out a medicine; on the other hand we may take the example of sweets, if eaten in excess, (the result will be) suffering from hyperacidity. Alas, this poison-water, fuddling man! If (you feel) you cannot do without it, please do take care! (You should, however, know) that according to the fundamental regulations of ethics (*pañca-śīla*), the basis (of the path leading) to liberation, as promulgated by the Completely Enlightened One, the drinking of *chang* is included among the five major evils...[79] *Chang* may be indispensable on many occasions; but then there is the (danger of) guzzling beyond measure. The more one quaffs, the greater the thirst to be quenched. Why not in that case drink

water instead of beer? If one is not prepared to do that, restraint is a must."[80]

Apart from his literary works and preachings Ngag-dbang Tse-ring is also credited with a cultural legacy, most of it still preserved in Zangskar. He, as his disciples state, has been responsible for the building and repairs of parts of rDzong-khul Gompa, for the execution of many a mural painting depicting the five Dhyāni-Buddhas, the chief Bodhisattvas and their retinues, heavenly abodes, the Buddha Śākyamuni with his main disciples, Mi-la Ras-pa, surrounded by themes taken from his biography, and numerous major and minor tutelary deities. He had a life-size image of Lord rDo-rje-'chang (Vajradhāra) installed in the inner shrine of rDzong-khul and consecrated a large number of icons showing, *inter-alia*, his teacher, Lama Rang-rig, and other important bKa'-brgyud masters. After the Grub-chen's demise the whole of his biography and hymns were written on the walls of rDzong-khul Monastery.[81]

(vi) The death of the Saint

When Ngag-dbang Tse-ring was seventy-six years old, like many a great mystic, he must have had some kind of precognition of the time of his death, for he asked his numerous disciples to assemble at rDzong-khul. There in a large gathering he announced that soon he would enter the blissful Pure Land of U-rgyan gLing, thus hinting at his death demonstrating the impermanence of all existential constituents, just as all the Buddhas of the past had done by way of entering into *mahā-parinirvāṇa*. The Grub-chen apprehended that many of his disciples would indulge in meaningless funeral rites and lamentations after his death. Such behaviour on the part of ordained persons, he said, would be a sign of ignorance; and if they sincerely wished to please him, they should themselves realize the full meaning of *anityatā*(impermanence) and be inspired to practise the Dharma continually and intensively, trying their level best according to his instructions which he had been giving them for many years. He straight-forwardly told them that they must abstain from all unnecessary rituals, prayers or offerings after his demise, "because as for my body," he said, "I myself shall have carried it away and shall also have taken care of burning it myself, the seventh-day rites,[82] too, will have been

performed by myself; (for) in the *Tantra* it is said:

> 'Caṇḍālī[83] blazes up at the navel.
> She burns the Five Buddhas.
> She burns Locanā and the others.[84]
> HAṂ[85] is burnt and the Moon melts.

"Having burnt, by way of burning through *mahāmudrā* with (the fire of) insight-knowledge all habitual trends towards worldliness and the whole mass of wishful thinking become manifest as mental defilements, the three and five poisons respectively, (I shall) bring about the burning of the dead body (in the fire of) the wisdom of the intrinsic nature of the Exalted One (*bhagavān*), the Thought of Enlightenment (*bodhicitta*), the indestructible 'body of great bliss' (*mahāsukhakāya*). Doing one's best on the occasion of the seventh-day rite in performing *pūjā*, making offerings, etc., (in order to become) a repository of merit (*puṇya-sambhāra*) without concern for one's possessions, amounts to making merit (at the level of) conventional (truth—*samvṛtisatya*). (I should like to) exert myself (at the level of) ultimate (truth—*paramārthasatya*) by way of transforming my body, the five aggregates (*skandha*) and all elements (*dhātu*) into a *maṇḍala* of three tiers which is the sphere of wisdom-*pūjā* so as to become a repository of wisdom (*jñāna-sambhāra*) (having realized in my) mind, in 'the *maṇḍala* of the exalted deity,' the intrinsic oneness of the act of offering, of the former and the object of offering (I, too,) have regularly made burnt offerings, etc., in my life (in order to conform to) conventional (practices); moreover, (at the level of) ultimate truth I have realized consummation[86] through the burning (fire) of wisdom supreme, in the range of Caṇḍālī, of the wisdom-fire of the mystical heat free from all defilements. As far as Dharma (practice) is concerned, I have no remorse, as I have made proper use of this unique occasion of being born a man—and not without success. Whether I shall die now in the mountains or in the valley, I have nothing to bother about, whether my body will be taken care of and cremated properly or not.[87]

"Then, my sincere disciple intent on (Ultimate) Release, who (are assembled here) to receive my last instructions, you should strive continually, day and night, single-mindedly

devoting yourselves to the Holy Dharma alone, without laxity, so as to (make progress) in your studies (of the Doctrine) (*śrutamayī-prajñā*), in clarifying your thinking (*cintāmayī-prajñā*) and in meditative practice (*bhāvanāmayī-prajñā*). Furthermore, in the first place one's Lama who conveys the knowledge of the Dharma should, in accordance with one's faith in him, be regarded as the Buddha himself, whose blessings one invokes. All the teachings received from his mouth have been imparted (in order to) investigate, to deal with one's own mental defilements; whatever taming[88] of one's mind, a veritable demon and harsh like rough leather, can be achieved here and now—that is the best of all goals. If one cannot love others more than oneself and is not uplifted by the 'Thought of Enlightenment,' one is just an ordinary adherent of religion and thus cannot transcend the cycle of birth and death."[89]

The Mahāsiddha, however, knew very well that the majority of his disciples instead of staying in the solitude of hermitages, preferred roaming in the villages, mentally as well as physically. In order to hide their lazy nature and their yearning for diversion, these ecclesiastics would just fall back upon their ready-made recitations for every occasion, often without even understanding properly what they were chanting. Repeatedly Ngag-dbang Tse-ring has referred to such "parasitical men in religious garb" who, though posing as men of special status, were always worried about remunerations for their "routine parrotry" of rain-making, disease-curing and other rituals to ensure prosperity. He said that he felt pity for those whose stupidity prevented them from appreciating the true taste of the Dharma. Again he exhorted them to give up their unbecoming habits of seeking pleasant distractions in villages, etc, instead of approaching the real task in hand, i.e., meditating in seclusion, lest they should be overcome by remorse and lamentation when at the threshold of inevitable death:

"...the nature of a man who has realized *mahāmudrā* in cool, tranquil and serene; whatever he does, whether he is walking, standing, sitting or lying, he always acts in accordance with the Dharma. He (prefers to) lead a life of humility, cultivating total awareness and ever aspiring to highest Enlightenment and Final Release. To develop fully his insight into (the absolute truth of) the equality of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, he stays in the

wilderness of the rocks and snow, in the seclusion of forests or cemeteries, eradicating his ego-clinging once for all. Wishlessness has arisen in his heart, not the slightest vestige of attachment is anywhere traceable. The powerful entanglements are cut off and, all illusions gone by themselves, the eight (worldly) *dharmas*[90] have become utterly meaningless to him. He is more concerned with the well-being of others than his own and is thus able to exchange his own happiness for the suffering of his fellow beings. As the unity of *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa* reveals itself to him, he fully realizes through penetrative gnosis that all phenomena—the world of inanimate things and sentient beings, the celestial abodes and their heavenly inhabitants, are intrinsically (nothing but) manifestations of once's own mind.[91]

"Exchanging one's own (well-being) for the others' (suffering)—(this act of) compassion being the nature of the profound skill in means, i.e. 'the Thought of Enlightenment,' and the Pure Light in Emptiness, the 'Two-in-one' of emptiness and compassion—if one wins all pervasive insight into their being inseparably one and also does not neglect (such insight-knowledge), one will not fall a victim to his inclination to wrong views tending towards nihilism and will thus steadily progress on the path leading to Buddhahood. Further, holding to emptiness as a (view), while ignoring (at the necessary level of *samvṛtisatya*) the law of cause and effect—this is not the position of Mahāyāna at all, but amounts to rashness of completely misunderstanding '*śūnyatā* :

"Mind itself, luminous and void, is the realm
  of the absolute (*dharamkāya*);
Compassion as means (and wisdom) are intrinsically one.
The *yogī*, continually abiding at this level of reality,
(Has accomplished the) essence of meditation;
Unperturbed and persevering, he experiences
  without interruption
The Clear Light in the oneness of emptiness and
  compassion.
As his realization is maintained through continual
  meditation,
Single-minded, effortless and spontaneous,
He has made his *samādhi* become omnipresent,

Like the sky free from clouds, in which neither there are,
Nor are not, beginnings, ends, centres or directions.
Suchness which is purity *per-se* having become manifest,
There is the Middle Path, (treading which one)
Does not take his stand on anything.
With the conch of (such similes, pregnant with meaning, like)
'The flower in the sky,' 'the son of a barren woman' or
'The hare's horn' is sounded fourth the Voice of the
Dharma, which
Emptiness itself and unimpeded, melodiously reverberates
in all directions.
May (this voice) enter the hearts of the devotees, well-
endowed,
(While the conch) is blown for the sake of all sentient
beings who
Want to be free from suffering, so that the ocean of
Saṃsāric existence may dry up; may all beings find
There place in the realm of righteousness and bliss!
That is all I have to tell you by way of advice."[92]

The disciples of Ngag-dbang Tse-ring who have committed to writing the latter's last words and described the circumstances of his death, declare that, just like Śākyamuni Buddha at the time of his *mahāparinirvāṇa* at Kuśinagara, the Grub-chen was also endowed with these eleven kinds of consciousness while preparing for his entering the Southern Pure Land of U-rgyan gLing, viz. "Awareness of absence of all attachment (I); awareness of great loving kindness towards all living beings (II); awareness that one has confessed even the smallest transgressions (if any) of the *vinaya*-rules (IV); awareness of having united the *Dharma-vinaya* of all the three 'vehicles' (*Hīna-Māha-, Vajrayāna*) (V); awareness of having uprooted the causes for all future evil (VI); awareness that one has contributed to the ever onward progress of goodness (VII); awareness of fearlessness regarding the Bardo state (VIII); awareness of the impermanence of all conditioned things (IX); awareness of *mahāparinirvāṇa* being absolute peace (X); after having made manifest these types of consciousness, he caused his thinking to stop altogether by entering the four illimitable absorptions (of immateriality) (*arūpadhyāna*) (XI)."[93]

After his farewell address to his followers the Mahāsiddha went to Nāropā's Cave near rDzong-khul for his final retreat in which he stayed, most, of the time in *dhyāna*, for nine months. At the end of that period Ngag-dbang Tse-ring caught a mild cold. Simultaneously, unprecedented disorders in nature like earthquakes or unseasonable thundering were noticed which, according to a saying of U-rgyan Padma (Padmasaṃbhava) herald the demise of a great enlightened being, depriving mankind of one of its choosen few. The Grub-chen foresaw that his *dharmadūta* works in this world had come to an end. Even the Buddhas of the past, in due course of time, had to bring out the truth that ultimately every phenomenon is transitory: "At the level of conventional truth everything exists: but according to *paramārtha-satya* even I, the Buddha, do not exist."[94] Contemplating thus, at the beginning of the Wood-Tiger year,[95] while sitting in the lotus-posture, Ngag-dbang Tse-ring entered into *mahāparinirvāṇa*.[96]

REFERENCES

1. *Life and Works*, I, 9, 5ff.
2. gNya'-khri bTzan-po (believed to be a descendant of the Licchavis of the ancient Indian Vajjian Republic, see *sLob-deb rab-gsal sgron-me 5*) descended upon the sacred mountain of Yar-lha-sham-po in Yarlung, where he was received by a circle of twelve men, whose identity as chieftains, shepherds, sages, etc. varies in different versions. Because he came from the sky, they resolved to make him king, and carried him in a palanquin on their necks. So he was called the 'Neck-Enthroned Mighty One' (gNya'-khri bTzan-po)," D.L. Snellgrove and H. Richardson, *A Cultural History of Tibet*, p. 23.
3. dPa'-gdum—Administratively Ladakh district is divided into three sub-divisions (*tehsil*): Leh, Kargil and Zangskar. Ever since dPa'-gdum has been the headquarters of Zangskar Tehsil.
4. *mChod-gzhi*; 'land donation-support'—refers to the practice of kings and land owners of attaching agricultural or pasture-land (often encompassing a few villages or even districts) to monasteries. The income from the landed property thus acquired has always been used for the maintenance of respective monastic institutions. The landed property owned by the monasteries in Ladakh are in most cases donations made by Ladakhi kings from time to time.
5. It is not known who was Ang-ghora's wife, yet at any rate, an attempt seems to have been made to connect the Zangskari lineage of Ang-ghoras with that of the royal dynasty of Tibet.

6. Traditionally Gu-ge Lo-tza-ba has been regarded as an incarnation of the celebrated translator Rin-chen bZang-po (958-1055 A.D.), under whose supervision numerous Sūtras and Tantras along with their voluminous commentaries were translated from Sanskrit into Tibetan, and who is credited with the founding of a large number of temples and monasteries, most of them still preserved and of great importance from the standpoint of cultural history of the tenth and eleventh centuries. Cf. D.L. Snellgrove and H. Richardson : *A Cultural History of Tibet*, p. 113. The 'line of incarnation' of Gu-ge Lo-tza-ba started after the great translator, from the eleventh century onwards. When Gu-ge was part of Western Tibet, the present Upper Kinnaur and Spiti fell under the Gu-ge jurisdiction, and therefore bKa'-gnam Monastery in Kinnaur and Kee Monastery in Spiti, Himachal Pradesh, have till nowadays been seats of the incarnations of Gu-ge Lo-tza-ba.

7. According to the local people's belief, it is a cave of the great Indian sage and mystic Nāropa of Phullahari, situated one league from rDzong-khul high upon a mountain slope. Zangskari anchorites were fond of this cave and meditated there from time to time.

8. rDzong-khul—a village in Central Zangskar; rDzong-khul Monastery has been a seat of the 'Brug-pa bKa'-brgyud-pa School, and Grub-chen Ngag-dbang Tse-ring, after his *pravrajyā*—ordination in Central Ladakh, studied and lived here as a *śrāmaṇera*. The manuscripts which are the basis of this thesis, have been found in this monastery.

9. *Ibid.*, I, 15, 3 ff.

10. According to the Tibetan sixty year cycle, the Fire-Bird Year, (i.e., in the thirteenth cycle) corresponds to A.D. 1717. For details see, D.L. Snellgrove, *Four Lamas of Dolpo*, pp. 75, 76.

11. sTag-tsang Ngag-dbang mTso-skyes rDo-rje, the second in the line of the *sprul sku* (*nirmāṇakāya*) of Hemis Monastery, was revered as the most prominent teacher after the first incarnate *lāmā*, sTag-tsang Ras-pa, Śambhūnātha, a contemporary of King Seng-ge rNam-rgyal (1590-1635). Ngag-dbang mTso-skyes rDo-rje was also well known for his multifarious Dharma activities which included the construction and consecration of *stūpas*, Buddha images for the main assembly hall in his monastery.

12. Hemis Monastery is situated about 35 km. south-east of Leh, located at the entrance of a spacious high altitude valley south of the river Indus. This *gompa* was founded by the first sTag-tsang Ras-pa, the famous Śambhūnātha, at the time of King Seng-ge rNam-rgyal. A.H. Francke, in his translation of the *Chronicles of Ladakh*, p 109, has the following eulogy : "In the whole world, is there a king like Seng-ge (lion) or a *lāmā* like sTag (tiger) ?" Hemis Gompa is the biggest monastery in Ladakh, belonging to the 'Brug-pa bKa'-brgyud School.

13. These are the three robes (*tricīvaara*) of the fully ordained monk (*bhikṣu—dge-slong*) viz. (a) *saṃghāṭi* (outer, ceremonial robe), (b) *uttarāsaṇga* (upper garment), (c) *antaravāsaka* (lower garment).
14. *Dha-man* : a kind of drum, widely used all over Ladakh; the *dha-man* is a must at every ceremony and celebration except at funeral rites. This instrument can be modulated in many ways so as to suit every occasion on which it is played.
15. *bSu-rna* : the Ladakhi clarinet, in shape and size resembling the *śahnāi*. This instrument and the *dha-man* are always played together
16. An "empowered staff" (freely rendered) is usually made of sandal-wood at whose tip is fastened a bunch of loose silk strings in the shape of a rose in full blossom. While the *lāmā*, sitting on an elevated seat, is holding it the audience is passing by, each person touching with his head the staff which, however, is only used when the number of devotees seeking the *lāmā's* blessings is very large.
17. *Ibid.*, I, 24, 3 ff.
18. *No-no* is an honorific for *phru-gu* (boy); possible though, it is not very likely that Ngag-dbang Tse-ring composed these verses at the age of ten or eleven. Most probably he wrote them much later when recalling his childhood experiences. The usage of the term *no-no* may imply the meaning "all that time when I was still a boy," thus indicating that Ngag-dbang Tse-ring composed the verses retros-pectively.
19. *Ibid.*. I, 25, 6 ff.
20. A word of respect used for monks and elder persons.
21. Cf. *Astasāhasrikā Prājñāpāramitā*, Darbhanga Ed., p. 238 ff; Tibetan tr., MS. folio 373a ff. *Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Slokas*. p. 201 ff. In this connection it may be remarked that Ngag-dbang Tse-ring's spiritual ancestors were also profoundly influenced by the *Sadāprarudita-parivarta*, i.e., Milarepa who, while undergoing penances, ran away from his master, but returned after having recited the thirtieth chapter of the *Aṣṭa* (Biography of Milarepa, Chapter 2); and sGam-po-pa,too, set out to seek his *guru*, Milarepa, as did 'the Ever-Crying Bodhisattva' (The Hundred Thousand Songs, chapter 41).
22. Lama gZim-dpon was the first incarnate *lāmā* with whom Ngag-dbang Tse-ring had closer contact while undergoing training as a novice. Marginal illustrations in the second volume of the rDzong-khul manuscript reproduction show the various masters of the bKa'-brgyud/Zangskar-'Brug-pa lineage, the thirteenth and last master depicted being the Grub-chen Ngag-dbang Tse-ring, preceded by Lama gZim-dpon.
23. 'Bar-gdan Monastery is one of the centres of the 'Brug-pa bKa'-brgyud Sect situated in Central Zangskar. This monastery was founded by Grub-chen bDe-ba rGya-mtso in the seventeenth century.

24. On ceremonial gatherings of some import, e.g., while welcoming somobody or seeing someone off, a group of gaily dressed people are holding, to underline the auspiciousness of the occasion, *dkar-bcos*, jugs filled with milk or beer. On wedding-ceremonies the *dkar-bcos* holders usually receive handsome remunerations from the relatives of the newly-weds.
25. *Ibid* , I, 34, 1 ff (freely rendered).
26. *Ibid.*, I, 35, 2 ff (freely rendered).
27. Lit. 'hair-offering.' In the Theravāda countries during *pabbajjā* ceremonies (novice ordination) *skra-phud* is not Practised, whereas the hair-shaving ceremony of the Zen Schools in East Asia resembles the 'hair-offering rite.'
28. *mKhan-po* means *upādhyāya*, preceptor.
29. *Ibid.*, I, 44, 1 ff.
30. H.V. Guenther; *The Life and Teachings of Nāropa*, Introduction, p. 1.
31. *Studies in the Buddhistic Culture of India*, p. 453.
32. *Hevajra Tantra*, Part I, pp. 14, 15.
33. *A Cultural History of Tibet*, p. 139.
34. *Life and Works*, I, 381.
35. *Ibid.*
36. *A Cultural History of Tibet*, p. 137.
37. *Mk'yen Brtse's Guide to the Holy Places of Central Tibet*, p. 118.
38. Cf. I. 339.
39. This has reference to a Tibetan story, often narrated: The pious mother of a merchant always reminded her son whenever he set out for India to do business, to bring her on his return from the Holy Land a relic of the Buddha. Several times already her son had returned home empty-handed. At last, again having come back without any relic, he remembered his mother's fervent wish. He plucked out a tooth from a dog's carcass lying by the roadside and offered it to his mother. Overjoyed she worshipped the tooth, day and night, thinking it to be that of the Buddha. Her belief was so strong that the dog's tooth began to emit rays of light.
40. See *Chos-'byung-bstan-pa'i Padma-rgyas-pa'i Nyin-byed ces-bya-ba bzhugs so*, folios 568, 569.
41. *Ibid.*, folios 579-581.
42. *Ibid.*, folio 578 and 1, 384. The designation *'Brug-pa* (from *'brug*—thunder, dragon) is liable to create some misunderstanding as regards the provenance of the 'Brug-pa sect, since *'brug-pa* also means 'Bhutanese' (from *'Brug-yul*—Bhutan). Cf. S.C. Das. *Tibetan English Dictionary*, p. 932: "The monks of 'Brug Monastery became famous for their learning and spread Buddhism in the wild mountainous country of Bhutan founding monasteries

there; whence from that time Bhutan came to be known as the country of 'Brug. The Bhutanese still follow the teachings of gTzang-pa rGya-ras."

43. *Ibid.*, folio 590.
44. *Ibid.*, folios 590-92 (adapted).
45. *Life and Works*, I, 404.
66. W.Y. Evans Wentz, *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines*, p. 251.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 112 (here as in other quotations the way of Romanizing Tibetan words has been modified in the interest of uniformity).
48. *Life and Works*, II, 28, 6ff.
49. O-rgyan or Urgyen, i.e., Swat. "This country, which the Tibetans call Urgyan (from Sanskrit Uḍḍiyāna), became for them a holy land, for two reasons—because Padmasambhave was born there and because it was regarded in India and elsewhere as the land of flying fairies, *ḍākinis* and *yoginīs*, who could perform all sorts of miracles and magic." (G. Tucci, *Tibet—Land of Snows*, p. 182).
50. *Ibid.*, II., 29, 2ff.
51. *Ibid.*, II, 29, 4ff.
52. *Ibid.*, I, 61, 4ff.
53. *Ibid.*, II, 27, 1ff.
54. The Sanskrit version of 'Ngag-dbang Tse-ring'.
55. Instead of rtogs-pa'i read *dogs-pas*.
56. *Ibid.*, II, 52, 7ff.
57. *Ibid.*, II, 53, 2ff.
58. *Ibid.*, II, 56, 2ff.
59. *Ibid.*, II, 56, 6ff.
60. See *infra*, pp. 94-95.
61. See *infra*, p. 129.
62. *Ibid.*, II, 30, 6ff.
63. Lit. 'solitude-like he walks around.'
64. *Ibid.*, II, 68, 1ff.
65. Cf. *Life and Works*, 2, 168, 5ff.
66. See *kaṣāyas* enumerated in *Sukhāvatīvyūha*, in *Mahāyānasūtrasaṃgraha*, vol. I, p. 257), viz. *kalpakaṣāya* (impurities as prevalent in the aeon of depravity), *sattva-kaṣāya* (profligacy), *dṛṣṭikaṣāya* (perversity of views), *āyuṣkaṣāya* (decrease of the duration of life), *kleśakaṣāya* (mental defilements in general). Cf. S. Das, *op. cit.*, p. 507.
67. The Dril-bu-ri (*Ghaṇṭā-giri*) covers, indeed, as the present writer in the course of his field work in Lahul could observe, an area resembling a triangle whose edges are formed by the Chandra River in the south, by the Bhaga River and a brook, both coming from the north and flowing into the Chandra near Tandi and Gondla respectively.
68. *Life and Works*, I, 129, 1ff.

69. Cf. "...there are no places of pilgrimage like those within one's own body." *Hevajra Tantra*, part I, p. 9, tr. by D.L. Snellgrove.
70. *Life and Works*, II, 16, 1ff. Cf. *Hevajra Tantra*, Part I. p. 11, "...He is free from all conventions and wanders as he pleases, knowing no distinction between friend or foe, clean or unclean, good or evil."
71. *Ibid.*, II, 16, 2ff.
72. *Ibid.*, II, 14, 1ff.
73. *Ibid.*, II, 18, 1ff.
74. *Life and Works*, I, 43.
75. *Ibid.*, I, 102, 6ff.
76. *Ibid.*, I, 355, 2ff.
77. *Life and Works*, II, 401, 5ff.
78. *Life and Works*, I, 209, 6.
79. *Ibid.*, I, 209, 2ff.
80. *Ibid.*, I, 210, 6ff.
81. Cf. *Life and Works*, I, 136, 159, 162, 166, 186, 187; II, 4, 5.
82. According to the directions in the *Bar-do thos-grol*, besides the main prayers and offerings immediately after death, special rites are to be performed on the seventh day, during the fourth and seventh weeks after decease of a person.
83. Cf. *Hevajra Tantra*, Part I, p. 36, : "Their contact (breath—the two psychic streams with *bodhicitta*), which is the contact of Wisdom and Means, of Sun and Moon, is envisaged as Fire which is Caṇḍālī, and so Caṇḍālī (mystic heat) burns." (brackets are the present writer's).
84. ". . . the five Buddhas, who embody the five transcendent wisdoms, are equated with the five evils that lie at the root of phenomenal existence." *op. cit.*, p. 29. " . . . the Five Buddhas and the four goddesses, Locanā (earth), Māmakī (water), Paṇḍarā fire), and Tārā (air) . . . The fifth element, space, coalesces with consciousness (*vijñāna*) at the Centre." *op. cit.*, p. 31.
85. "As seed-syllable she (Caṇḍālī) is the syllable A, and as a blazing A it may be imagined. She is therefore also Nairātmyā and may be known under any name that signifies the bliss of this union, as Avadhūtī, the name of the central vein itself, or as Dombī. She is now envisaged as moving upwards, consuming as she goes, from the navel to the heart and thence to the throat and the head. Then she reaches the *bodhicitta* in the head, the Moon, here envisaged as the syllable HAM. This melts at the contact and flows downwards through the central vein, pervading the whole body through the various *cakras* as it goes. It reaches the lowest *cakra* and A and HAM become AHAM ("I" the reintegrated self) in the Joy Innate." *Hevajra Tantra*, Part I, pp. 36, 37.
86. " . . . the final consummation, towards which the practice with

maṇḍalas and *mudrās* and *dhyāna* and *japa* lends its aid, and in the realization of which they are all transcended." *Ibid.*, p. 37.

87. *Life and Works*, I, 222, 2ff.
88. Instead of '*thul read thul*.
89. *Ibid.*, I, 230, 1ff.
90. Viz., *lābha* (gain), *alābha* (loss), *stuti* (*yaśas*—praise/fame), *nindā* (*ayaśas*—blame/obscurity), *sukha* (happiness), *duḥkha* (suffering), *jīvita* (being alive), *maraṇa* (death).
91. *Life and Works*, II, 355, 3ff.
92. *Life and Works*, I. 230. 6ff.
93. *Ibid.*, I, 232, 3ff.
94. *Life and Works*, II, 352, 1ff. Cf. : " . . . all the Tathāgatas are actually non-existent. This assertion that all the Tathāgatas do not exist as a reality is made (indirectly to indicate that reality itself is beyond affirmation and negation)." (*Suraṅgama-Samādhi-Sūtra*, Chapter I, p. 13).
95. At I, 232 it is mentioned that Ngag-dbang Tse-ring entered the nine months' retreat at the age of seventy-six in the Water-Ox year, and at I, 237 we learn that he attained *parinirvāna* in the first month of the Wood-Tiger at the age of seventy-seven. According to the Tibetan Sixty-years' Cycle, the Water-Ox year corresponds to 1793 and the Wood-Tiger year to 1764 respectively. Cf. A.I. Vostrikov, *Tibetan Historical Literature*, p. 239, and D.L. Snellgrove, *Four Lamas of Dolpo*, p. 75.
96. *Ibid.*, I, 237.

CHAPTER IV

Religion and Philosophy of Ngag-dbang Tse-ring

(i) Tāntrika Heritage

From the above translations it is evident that Ngag-dbang Tse-ring was a follower of Tantra, practising and teaching his disciples according to the doctrines of the bKa'-brgyud Order. When, with reference to the Mahāsiddha's sermons, giving some thought to doctrinal points, just a few hints have to suffice, since Tantra is a most complicated topic to deal with and has yet to be scrutinized exhaustively in a scientific manner. There are many phantastic ideas in circulation concerning Tantra which can safely be by-passed as unauthentic. It is so far just a handful of first-class scholars who have undertaken the arduous task of investigating Tāntric works. Among them is D.L. Snellgrove who, impeccably objective, has done much to get Tāntric literature in right perspective through his critical study of the *Hevajra Tantra*. One important statement of his is in this connection worth being repeated here, namely that "the term *śakti* is not used in Buddhist *tantras*...If we must use a Sanskrit term, the correct term is *prajñā*, ..." and that "...the Buddhist *tantras* differ chiefly from the non-Buddhist, and it is unfortunate that the relative ignorance concerning Buddhist *tantras* should have permitted reference to them with terminology which is just not properly applicable."[1] Besides the typical Tāntric tenets, Ngag-dbang Tse-ring harmonizes both Mādhyamika and Yogācāra ideas. This was done before him by Dīpāṅkara Śrī-jñāna Atīśa, rJe Tzong-kha-pa and others. As for 'typical Tāntric tenets,' put in a nutshell, it seems opposite to quote from the epilogue to G.C.C. Chang's successful complete English translation of rJe Mi-la Ras-pa's *One Hundred Thousand Songs*.

Apologetically G.C.C. Chang writes, introducing his 'Central Teachings of Tibetan Tantrism,' that "...Tāntric practice by no means implies indulgence and laxity, but hard labour, strict discipline, and stead-fast perseverance; that without resolute, renunciation and uncompromising discipline, as Gautama Buddha Himself stressed, all the sublime ideas and dazzling images depicted in Mahāyāna and Tāntric Buddhism are no better than magnificent illusions."[2]

"...Tibetan Tantrism is a form of practical Buddhism abounding in methods and techniques for carrying out the practice of all the Mahāyāna teachings...Buddhist Tantrism lays most of its stress on *practice* and *realization*, rather than on philosophical speculations.[3]

"...Buddha-Mind is a GREAT ILLUMINATING-VOID AWARENESS...all Buddhist teachings are merely 'exaltations,' preparations, and directions leading one toward the unfoldment of this GREAT ILLUMINATING-VOID AWARENESS...to unfold this Buddha-Mind, two major approaches or Paths are provided for differently disposed individuals: the Path of Means, and the Path of Liberation. The former stresses an approach to Buddhahood through the practice of taming the *prāṇa*, and the latter an approach through the practice of taming the mind. Both approaches, however, are based on the the truism of the IDENTICALITY OF MIND AND PRĀṆA (*rlung sems dbyer-med*), which is the fundamental theorem of Tantrism...

"The practice that stresses taming the *prāṇa* is called the 'Yoga with Form,' or the 'Path of Means.' The practice that stresses taming the mind is called the 'Yoga without Form,' or the 'Path of Liberation.' The former is an exertive type of Yoga practice, and the latter a natural and effortless one, known as Mahāmudrā."[4]

"The Path of Liberation, or the Yoga without Form...its essence consists in the Guru's capability of bringing to his disciple a glimpse of the Innate Buddha-Mind in its primordial and natural state. With this initial and direct 'glimpsing experience,' the disciple gradually learns to sustain, expand, and deepen his realization of this Innate Mind. Eventually he will consummate this realization to its full blossoming in Perfect Enlightenment. This practice is called Mahāmudrā...

"The central teaching of Mahāmudrā consists of two major points: relaxation and effortlessness. All pains and desires are of a tense nature. But Liberation, in contrast, is another name for 'perfect relaxation.' Dominated by long-established habits, however, average men find it most difficult, if not entirely impossible, to reach a state of deep relaxation; so instructions and practices are needed to enable them to attain such state. The primary concern of Mahāmudrā, therefore, is to instruct the *yogī* on how to relax the mind and thus induce in him the unfolding of his Primordial Mind. Paradoxically, effortlessness is even more difficult to achieve than relaxation. It requires long practice to become 'effortless' at all times and under all circumstances. If one can keep his mind always relaxed, spontaneous, and free of clinging, the Innate Buddha-Mind will soon dawn upon him.

"The Path of Means and the Path of Liberation, exist only in the beginning stages. In the advanced stages these two Paths converge and become one..."[5]

Finally coming to Ngag-dbang Tse-ring's *mahāparinirvāṇa*, it is interesting to note the enumeration of the 'eleven types of consciousness' which, as far as the author can remember, are not canonical. Worthy of remark, for instance, is the mentioning of the fifth type of consciousness, the awareness of having united the *Dharma-vinaya* of all the three 'vehicles' (*Hīna.*, *Mahā.*, *Vajrayāna*). The term *Dharma-vinaya* does, in fact, frequently occur in the Pali canon. The 'eleventh type of consciousness' indicates as to how Ngag-dbang Tse-ring proceeded yogically. In the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*[6] a clear and somewhat detailed description is given of what states of *dhyāna* the Tathāgata had passed through. The notes of the Mahāsiddha's disciples do not furnish us with such precise detail; however, from their hints we may glean that Ngag-dbang Tse-ring experienced all the *dhyānas* in the same order as the Tathāgata did before his Great Extinction. When the Grub-chen stayed in his final retreat, we can infer, most of the time he must have remained in the deepest state of absorption, i.e. *nirodha-samāpatti*, in which all sensory functions come to a complete standstill and likewise nearly all bodily activities. It is important to bear in mind that like the Tathāgata the Mahāsiddha had to emerge first from all states of absorption, and in a

moment, then, of fullest clarity, in an all-encompassing vision of Ultimate Truth—the saying of a previous Buddha is flashing through Ngag-dbang Tse-ring's mind: "...even, I, the Buddha, do not exist." He became one with the utterly Beyond' (*pārasamgate*).

(ii) A Brief Anthology of His Writings

CLIMBING THE LADDER TO THE HIGHEST REALIZATION IN THIS VERY LIFE—INSTRUCTIONS FOR RECLUSES[7]

Obeisance to the Guru !
In the vast expanse of the space-like unborn *dharmakāya* (the Absolute)
There radiates, untrammelled, like scintillating
Galaxies the *sambhogakāya* (in blissful realms); and
In his earthly frame (*nirmāṇakāya*) the Guru emits
His myriad warmth (bestowing) rays of twofold wisdom,[8]
Dispelling the fog of delusion enveloping all beings.
At His feet I bow down.
Just a dream are all 'good things' of this life, castles (in the air);
The eight worldly *dharmas*,[9] (life's) variety show,
Put the deluded worldling in fetters.
Having realized this, may all who in seclusion, recommended by the Victorious One,
Apply themselves single-mindedly to the intensive practice of meditation, meet with success.
Respectfully and whole-heartedly putting my trust in
Countless Buddhas and their spiritual sons,
(I) shall describe, here and now, the excellent ladder of lapis lazuli,
Leading to the Timeless Sphere of the Suchness of the three *kāyās*,[10]
And set forth the instructions (as to how) to scale it in this very life.

If in one's search of truth[11] one has come to regard life, the three forms of *samsāric* existence,[12] *sub specie aeternitartis*—being like a crematorium always kept burning or (evanescent)

like dew on the tip of a blade of grass, and (if one wants) to apply oneself to a recluse's mode of life by staying in solitary retreat, one has to conform to an orderly procedure, i.e. one has to train oneself according to the *prātimokṣa* rules, the *bodhisattava* and Tāntric vows.[13] Although guarding (one's conduct) against evil practices by maintaining the purity of *śīla* and keeping all vows is (in itself) complete (*vinayā*-practice), there are certain additional (preconditions and) regulations laid down to suit such meditative practices as the fourfold *yoga*.[14]

One has to be fully aware, how comparatively rare it is to be born a man with the maximum potential of grasping (religious truths); that it is a marvelously unique event to become acquainted with the precious *Buddha-dharma*, or even to be accepted (as disciple) by a qualified *guru*, thus being initiated into the very depths of the Holy Dharma. One has to be very clear in his mind regarding all disadvantages of *samsāra* and the advantages of (Ultimate) Release. Then it is desirable that one leaves behind his native land, relatives, monasteries, companions, etc. For the Holy Dharma's sake one should vow and actually fulfil what one has promised, namely to (stay) in solitary retreat, even at the cost of his life, till one has attained perfection.

The spot for such (a kind of retreat) should possess three particular advantages, viz. it should be pleasing, appealing to one's temperament; it ought to be an auspicious and inspiring place, no-man's land and thus absolutely peaceful. This has also been expressed in the *Candrapradīpa Sūtra*.[15]

> "Having left behind the comforts in towns and villages,
> You should always make the seclusion of forests your home,
> Faring thus single-mindedly, like a rhinoceros,[16]
> You will before long attain to the highest peace of mind."

Chos-rje rGya-ras, too, has it that:

> "One's native land is Māra's prison;
> If one stay there even for a while,
> Desire and aversion will become stronger and stronger.
> Though all amenities are easily available there,
> One had better leave his native place behind;
> If one does not do so, how can one get the better of *kleśas*?"

The incomparable rGyal-dbang rJe says:

"(Staying in) one's native land in monasteries attached to villages,
One's mind will be overpowered by the eight worldly *dharmas*,
So that one's precious life will just be trifled away.
Therefore retire to a lonely hermitage, a truly 'neutral' place."

Regarding *neutral* places, rJe Ngag-dbang bZang-po remarks: "Having gone into homelessness, a real meditator may stay at (any of) these six abodes: at the foot of a tree; in a cave, deserted (cell), in rocky wilderness, dense forests,"[17] or in any (other) no-man's land."

Accordingly, one should carefully select the places (where one intends to meditate). The ideal abode would be an area of six square feet. The criterion as for the (right or) wrong place is whether in one's introspective efforts one makes progress or not. Ācārya Padma dKar-po has given the following explanation: "As for wrong places—if one stays in monasteries near villages, breeding-places of mental defilements, exposed to desire and aversion, one should reckon with one's falling a prey to the mental taints by knowingly (substituting) gradual mind-contamination for meditation. Further, one would be at fault if, under the influence of bad friends and (likely to) be misled by them, one does not shun (such dangerous surroundings). If one is really concerned with practising the Dharma to cross the (*saṃsāric*) ocean (of birth and death), one must steer clear of unsuitable places and bad friends..." As for a suitable place, rJe rGod-tsang-pa observes: "The spot where to enhance others' and one's own weal, should be blessed, pleasing and free from harm."

At such an (auspicious) place then one should carry on with (his meditative training) up to the very end—Enlightenment, even if one were to risk his life, as has been stressed by Lord Nāgārjuna:[18]

"A wise man does not make big promises;
If he cannot, however, help giving his word of honour,
Then, like a rock-inscription indelible,
He will keep it, even if he were to lose his life."

Chos-rJe Ras-pa insists that "mind never tires of conceiving, (the ocean of) *samsāra* will never dry up, the indentifying oneself with (the continual process of) rebecoming goes on and on. Whereas welfare work, etc., can be done any time, the realization of the ultimate goal, Enlightenment, in this very life, is of prime significance.

In the same vein 'Brug-pa Rin-po-che prays; "May I, as (extolled) in the biographies of the ancient worthies of the bK'-brgyud lineage, (stay) in misty caves in the mountains, collecting and pacifying my mind, so that it may never become distracted again. With all my heart I pray that renouncing, once for all, all wordly hustle and bustle, I may (always stay) in empty caverns of rocky no-man's land. May I (be able) to completely eradicate attachment to this world and its comforts. Whatever grasping there be in terms of 'I and mine',[19] may (I) get the better of it! May I, no longer concerning myself with food and clothing and without deviating from the conduct of ancient worthies, gain complete access to ultimate Reality! (Acquiring) ordinary knowledge is sheer desire. May it be overcome by transcendental vision. In the clear light of total awareness there must arise direct (insight into the process of) dependent co-arising (*pratītyasamutpāda*)..."

...As regards indigence, sickness or fear of death, etc., they being flimsy pretexts (for giving up meditation in quest of Ultimate Truth), rJe Ngag-dbang bZang-po says, so that one may persevere in his practice:

"Renunciation, faith and dispassionateness,
Recollection, aspiration and earnest diligence,
With these six, one masters meditation.
Apparitions, illness, or even being manhandled,
Want of food and clothing, or being despised,
These are the six 'advantages' of the genuine *yogī*."

Feeling shame also forms part of one's meditative training, as we find rJe Mi-la Ras-pa saying (in his biography):[20] "If I am unable to (gain access) to the Dharma due to lack of shame, I had better die." When modesty and shame are lacking, to be sure, one does not only fail in his meditation, but incurs other people's blame. If one cannot resolutely put an end to his

wool-gathering, (even though sitting) in a cave, mental distractions will bring all his (previous efforts) to nought. Therefore, in one's Dharma-practice through humbling oneself, feeling shame and through modesty should one for the Dharma's sake (an unperturbed) be able to endure disease and (if necessary) even face death. Thus, again, spoke rJe-btzun Mi-la Ras-pa[21]: "If I am to die in this mountain-hermitage my, the *yogī*'s, wish will be fulfilled." With such (a firm attitude) as he has on many occasions shown, should one practise the Dharma by way of 'inner practice,' (not by way of outer) but 'inner austerities,' not concerning himself with (physical) but with the 'inner death' (of the mental defilements).

Having tasted the solitude of retreats, the Bodhisattva Asaṅga said, while regarding excitement and distraction, in every respect arising due to the eight worldly *dharmas*, as chief enemies:

"Having forsaken harmful abodes, gradually
Will one's mental taints diminish,
Having forsaken confusion of mind, naturally
Will one progress, on and on.
When the light of insight begins to shine,
All doubts are dissolved and wisdom is born.
'Tis on seclusion that, while practising,
The Buddha's sons rely."

(Once) rJe-btzun (Mi-la Ras-pa addressed his sister thus):

"Not giving up the eight worldly *dharmas* and
Without meditating in the snowy mountains of La-phyi,
Your attachment to dear and near ones will rend your heart.
By your way of talking now my contemplation is disturbed.
Having been born again, who knows when he will have to
die ?
Being engaged in Dharma-practice, I cannot afford
postponing it;
I have to exert myself unflaggingly."[22]

On another occasion (the rJe-btzun made the following request) : "The sun has set; each of you should return to his home. Before long, who knows, I shall die. While carrying

through my task to realize highest Enlightenment, I have no time for gossiping. Therefore, please let me continue meditating."[23] (Having in like manner created a real sense of urgency) one should, treading the path to Ultimate Release, solely rely on the route (of practice) mapped out by his qualified *guru* . . .

(Once having availed himself of the advantages of staying in solitary retreat), one should exterminate attachment by comparing life's fleeting 'affluence' to . . . nauseating food, or *samsāric* surplus to fantastic dream-contents, which dissolve (upon awaking). But if desire for diversion etc. gets the upper hand, then (seclusion) instead of being conducive to steady progress will lead one to degeneration and final return to the 'madding crowd.'

If one stays in retreat (only) physically—like myself, poor fellow-bedecking the body with the ochre robe, one resembles just the tawny fox that also 'observes retreat.' If (while pretending to stay in loneliness) one indulges in such otiose activities as to confuse the mind, degrading it as it were, this is rank hypocrisy, fie! Staying in seclusion, perky and doing nothing to rid oneself of the three and five poisons[24] respectively, is indeed meaningless. O you believer in egoism, constantly obsessed by your own (little) benefits in this life, by (thoughts for) food and raiment, ruining even your own (spiritual welfare)—why should you stay in retreat if you have not yet really envisaged the attaining of Enlightenment, the aim of all aims—for the weal of all beings?

". . . Śākyamuni has shown his heroic effort in living for others' sake," says Maitreya, "and has accomplished the aim of all aims, his own and all sentient beings' welfare." Being cognizant of this fact, we appear in our way of acting, speaking and thinking the laziest and most lethargic persons unworthy of staying in a mountain-hermitage; (in fact) such a place and he who inhabits it, should complement each other (i.e. the place by being congenial, and the meditator by being worthy of it through his demure efforts). Alas, if—like myself—one does not exert himself to achieve (what is to be achieved), his staying in the mountains will in no way be different from the staying of wild animals, such as hyenas and wolves, in their den; in that case mountain-hermitages, retreats at the foot of a tree, at very remote places, in cemeteries, etc., are superfluous. One should

be fully aware that (dawdling in retreat) is tantamount to living a household life in town with all its diversions and distractions. (Again and again) one should contemplate impermanence and death, feel disgust and weary of (fickleness); then one should inspire himself to develop a more coherent recollection culminating in uninterrupted (total awareness).[25]

Sa-skya Pandita[26] (passes sarcastic remarks so that a meditator, once having decided to practise in loneliness, may guard against stagnation and other dangers) :

"Not as advised by the sages dispelling the mental fog of diversity,
And holding on to a particular, well hidden spot,
Steadily promoting his spiritual dimness (of self-complacency),
The 'Great Seer' resembles the marmot, expert in hibernating in 'retreat'.
Not bringing his mind under control by devotional exercises
But just sticking it out in rock wilderness for the sake of vying
(With other mountain-dwellers--who can stay longest)
His mind, (no doubt) is haunted by objects of desire all the time
The 'Great Seer' is ensconced in his mountains like a beast of prey.
Straying from the path leading to liberation, letting evil tendencies grow and grow,
His time spent in lonesome hermitage meant for wholesome purposes, becomes sheer wastage,
And before long he (turns) ritualist (to satisfy his) village 'clientele'
The Great Seer's fox-like roaming, though in no-man's land.
The eight worldly *dharmas* make him burn within like fire in the steppe,
Who for belly's sake is trying hard, always on the move,
Thus making his living by means, falling under 'wrong livelihood'
The Great Seer, like a dog poaching in the precincts of villages,

By wearing the yellow robe he acts a usurper,
Surrounding himself with motley retinue exhibiting (all shades of) lust and hatred,
'Flourishing' in the performance of the ten unvirtuous actions,
The Great Seer (and those like him) cause the states of woe (*durgati*) never to empty."

. . . While staying in retreat, honour, name and fame, etc. which this life may bestow, should not even for the twinkling of an eye be cared for, as Kha-rag sGom-chung warns :

"Veneration, name and fame are Māra's bait,[27]
When being revered, one is (bound to be) trapped (in his) snare.
Offerings made by devotees are a stumbling-block to one's practice.
Don't mistake poison for medicine !"[28]

. . . (Instead of being victimized by worldly enticements), we need prowess and resilience by living on the nectar of fewness of wishes and contentment, which Ācārya Nāgārjuna praises thus : [29]

"Among all worldly riches contentment is the best
Is a most helpful saying of the Teacher of gods and men.
If one employs, in every situation, this best (piece of advice) :
Be contented!—then (fewness of wishes) is his
'Real wealth,' even if worldly riches are not obtained."[30]

Likewise rJe Mi-la Ras-pa has (epitomized his whole spiritual career in *ri-khrod* (*viveka*—seclusion) thus :[31]

"Always having dreaded the eight unfavourable conditions,[32]
Contemplating impermanence and the disadvantages of *saṃsāra*,
Having seriously taken upon myself the teaching of *karma*, of the law of cause and effect,
And having whole-heartedly put trust in the Three Jewels,

By purifying the mind and realizing the absolute aspect of
bodhicitta;
I have undone the endless concatenation of obscuring
habitual tendencies
Through penetrative insight-knowledge, seeing that
All phenomena are nothing but a mirage,
Thus the realms of woe have completely lost their sting."[33]

(As for 'purifying the mind,' recollection and total awareness (*smṛti-samprajanya*) are to be cultivated uninterruptedly). In the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* it is said that :

"When one has developed recollection so that it
Has become established for the sake of protecting his mind,
Total awareness begins to function."[34]

In this connection we also find mentioned regarding the way of making progress in one's maintaining total awareness :

"Again and again one has to contemplate bodily
Conditions and states of mind. This is, in brief,
The mark of cultivating total awareness."[35]

(The art of meditation consists), according to rJe rGod-tsang-pa, (in converting all obstacles that are encountered during one's practice into meditation-objects) :

"Any place one has to put up with becomes a heavenly
abode;
In rocky caverns which nobody likes to occupy,
Whatever phenomena may there arise, they act as his
'teacher';
Under any circumstances he applied this *guru-yoga*,
Whose backbone is sincere devotion."[36]

(Once having perceived Ultimate Truth and won the insight-knowledge concerning the non-egoity of a person (*pudgala-nairātmya*) and of things (*dharma-nairātmya*), one is truly enabled to become more and more altruistic, without neglecting his further practice of meditation) as has been indicated by Atiśā Dīpaṅkara Śrījñāna :

"He who has experienced suffering within himself
And therefore fervently wishes, in any case,
To eliminate all the sufferings of his fellow beings,
Is a person that excels."[37]

The same (pious aspirations are nurtured) by rJe-btzun gLing Ras-pa who, preserving his (experience of) non-egoity through cultivating loving kindness, meditatively exchanges his (own happiness) for (the suffering) of all sentient beings :

"This is the *yogī's* task : to save through spontaneous
Great Compassion all beings, dear to him like his mother,
From the ocean of *saṃsāra*, from the six realms of
existence."[38]

. . . (As regards one's 'not neglecting further practice,' after having had experiences of enlightenment), rNal-'byor dBang-phyug Chen-po advises :

"If a *yogī* has succeeded in keeping (his practice)
Alive and spontaneous, this will result in full realization;
And having succeeded in preserving, like a Flowing stream,
the continuity of (his meditation),
(His experiences) will grow to maturity,
After having completely discarded all
Thought-constructions and discriminations,
May he make (his whole life)
Become one uninterrupted meditation!"[39]
The merit wrought by composing this (short) work
May be dedicated to all the infinite number of beings,
Like that of space—so that they may attain
Liberation from the ocean of suffering,
Enlightenment Supreme![40]

(iii) Miscellaneous Selections

URGENCY OF PRACTISING DHARMA

Happy the mind, when spontaneous and in its natural state;
A pretending, artificial mind is not happy.
How do (I) befool myself when under the sway of the
mental taints,
While being taken in by objects of the senses! (II, 26, 7)

Garments and ornaments are only attractive as long as
they are brand-new;
But what can remain brand-new for ever?
What a folly if (I), a *yogī*, yearn for the sight of
Glittering things and shiny robes,
Even if (my own) are in tatters and mere shreds! (II, 26, 5ff)

Not always, but only in her waxing phase
Does the moon shine brightly in the sky;
Deluded, indeed, is he who looks for
The full moon in the dark night of her waning phase.
(II, 27, 4ff)

Only during the day the rays of the sun shed their light;
Who would expect sunshine at night?
To be after warmth and sunlight in the depth of darkness
This would be sheer absurdity. (II, 27, 5ff)

Not always is it certain that we shall come into contact
with the sacred Dharma;
But once we have access, here and now, we are ill-advised,
If we do (not) want to (practise in accordance with it),
Waiting (instead) for "leisure hours"
Till our life-time is up, forfeited the (chances)
To practise, our mortal frame bereft of consciousness.
(II, 28, 1ff)

If at present one has many means at his disposal,
Acquired on account of previous (good actions),
One will not necessarily be so richly endowed at all times.
One is ill-advised if he wishes to (postpone) his practising
Liberality, etc., untill his stock of "goods" is exhausted.
(II, 28, 2)

ENTERING RETREAT TO PRACTISE THE DHARMA

Obeisance to all Gurus!
I bow down at the feet of my incomparable father-*guru*;
Pray bless this beggar (like disciple of yours)
Lest he should ever forsake hermitage.
Take pity on me (so that thanks to your blessing)
On my way all obstacles may be overcome.

From dazzling, snowy heights, lovely spots
Shaped like the letter "huṃ,"
There flows a rivulet with pellucid nectar-like water,
And across this brook to the south in rocky solitude
Majestically towers the lofty shrine founded by Lord Nāropa.
In the lower part of the valley the year's crop is reaped and
fruit is grown,
In that district, Zangskar by name, stands the "palace"
Where had stayed Padmasambhava, the Perfect One of
Urgyan,
And also the Great Sage, Śrī Nāropa.
This "fortress ' in no-man's-land is the Cave of Great
Happiness,
Behind which just out granite pinnacles sheer in all their
grandeur.
Vultures hover in the air (as though) testing their mighty
wings.
In front (below the hermitage) are fine meadows and
beautiful forests,
Inhabited by many kinds of birds, singing their songs
mellifluously,
And studded with flowers ever so fragrant.
Here a thousand melodious *mantras* always please the ear,
Be it the bees busily buzzing, or humming "huṃ, huṃ"
The soothing sounds of rivulets. All this music is a
Pūjā performed in honour of the Triple Gem,
An offering made to the holy Nāropa. (II, 56, 2ff)

REMISSNESS, EXHORTATIONS

A monk wearing costly robes,
On refinement ever intent and outer show,
Yet, oblivious of (the law of) cause and effect,
Neglecting his vows,
Will he not repent when death draws near? (II, 53, 1ff)

To study (meditation) without any insight,
Knowing nothing but perfunctory things
This will prove fruitless in time of need.
Therefore, contemplate so that the Great Meaning
May fully reveal itself. (II, 53, 2ff)

A handsome face is nothing but outer beauty,
Which is regularly looked after with painstaking care;
But what about the realization of the Great Meaning,
The perception of Ultimate Reality?
(Look within) and minutely examine your mind! (II, 53, 3ff)

Having stretched your limbs (a bit), with regard
To your body, a nest of diseases, you take it easy,
Sung in bed after recital of your liturgy
Suppose you were in the presence of a "man of knowledge,"
Would you not have to repent?
You had better give up mere jabbering (of your prayers).
(II, 53, 4ff)

Disgusted with his lonely cell in the mountains,
(The capricious recluse) under (various) pretexts
Has taken to wine and runs after women.
He roams the village streets, collecting scraps of food,
Just like a hungry, poaching dog.
Being given a morsel or two (or any amount),
His appetite is beyond control, knows no limit.
(Remembering the simile of) the hungry dog, should
He not refrain from close contacts and all relationship,
Cutting down, once and for all, desire's entanglements?
If contentment has not arisen in one's heart,
He runs the risk of being reborn a "hungry dog."
The glutton develops his ravenous appetite the more he eats;
Had he not better do something to get rid of his bad habit?
If one does not restrain himself in his drinking habits,
The five poisons in him, the mental taints, greed, hatred
(etc.) will (steadily) increase.
To go on the booze, alcoholic drinks are the root-cause
of all evils,
Bringing down disaster upon others as on oneself.
If contentment has not arisen in one's heart,
His thirst increases the more he drinks.
Had he not better quench his thirst with water instead of
beer
Just as an infant is given the nipple (to suck and keep
quiet)? (II, 160, 5ff)

MAKING PROGRESS—FOR ONE'S OWN AND OTHERS' SAKE

In the innermost recesses of one's mind, intrinsically pure
and spontaneously born,
It is here that the five Dhyāni-Buddhas abide,
Ubiquitous with their radiance of fivefold wisdom,
Insight-knowledge unalloyed, to realize the (real nature of)
Emptiness.
The basis of all, *mahāmudrā* is ultimate reality,
The Inborn, all-pervading and unimpeded.
Whatever phenomena may arise in the mind incessantly,
In the light of wisdom, as soon as they arise
They dissolve into pure luminosity.
Unperturbed practise with diligence to (discover the Buddha)
nature within you. (II, 30, 5ff)

(I feel pity) at the sight of an irreligious person,
Who busily wallows, here and there, in (fleeting affluence)
And merely wastes his time, having no purposeful aim
Either as for this life or the next.
However, (it is never too late) to live one's life
Meaningfully, putting forth effort and diligence (in one's
dharma-practice). (II, 84, 3ff)

(I feel pity) at the sight of a faithless fellow,
Who is ridiculing the teaching of good works
(and their efficiency).
In this very life he has wrought such bad *karma*
As to bring about his downfall into states of woe.
However, here and now, (it is not too late to) apply
Oneself to meritorious, wholesome actions. (II, 84, 4)

(I feel pity) at the sight of a man who hungers for power,
Whose present "absolute power" has boosted his
pride beyond control.
(Intoxicated with desire) and indescribably arrogant,
He exploits the poor and tortures the downtrodden.
(It is said), the bigger the power, the greater the evil.
(Remember, finally) nobody can escape the consequences
of his evil actions.

(O you "power-hunter") wisely use your present power and
Influence for the sake of the Dharma! (II, 84, 5ff.)

(I feel pity) at the sight of a deluded person,
Who does not know how to distinguish between
Good and evil, between virtue and sin.
In fact, his present human existence is more unfortunate
than that of a beast;
For he has turned his human state into mere wastage.
Such a deluded person should (at least)
Fervently pray and resolve in this life (to be reborn a man
in the next). (II, 84, 7ff)

REALIZATION

Here in the southern border-land where Mon-pas and
Tibetans (meet),
Is found the exalted cave of rDzong-khul,
secluded and inaccessible.
On the road (beneath) Tibetans and Mon-pas come and
go, (while)
In (the hermitage) one's mind gets deeply absorbed
in meditation and is more and more pacified.
In summer (when the snow melts) the footpaths
(leading to the cave) are blocked by torrential
glacier-water;
In winter, too, the *siddha's* abode (is ideal), cut off by
(huge masses of) snow,
A (really suitable) spot to befriend solitude and stay alone.
(Here *yogic*-heroes) have acquainted themselves with
Insight-knowledge and chose as companion their
own (Buddha) nature,
Being well looked after by the Triple Gem;
The father (ly protection of this place is granted by)
The ancient worthies of the bKa'-brgyud lineage;
The motherly Vajravārāhī is its divine protectress,
And (the atmosphere is permeated with the) pith
Instructions bestowed by my father-*gurus*, Rang-rig and
Hor-stod.
(In this hermitage) I have become proficient in applying
both skill in means and wisdom,

Having devoted myself to right views, contemplation and
right practice.
The range of right views has merged in infinitude;
Contemplation has culminated in the blissful gnosis of
non-duality;
And whatever action I perform, it has become (a source of
spiritual) strength and happiness.
Such is the application of right views,
Contemplation and right practice,
Resulting in these three : realization of the basis,
the path and of fruition, too.
The basis is the Unborn, the Absolute (*dharmakāya*),
sheer bliss.
The path is untrammelled, cleared of phenomenal plurality.
Fruition brings to maturity, spiritual strength and
ingenuous spontaneity. (II, 56, 6ff)

The true nature of *mahāmudrā* manifests itself as the way
(of enlightened action),
A veritable wish-fulfilling (tree) or *kāma-dhenu*.
The outcome of (such action) will be unbelievably fruitful,
A Priceless jewel granting all the beings' wishes.
When one matures within and sees the mind in its
pristine purity,
This results in the (realization of) *mahāmudrā*.
Experiencing these three—the basis, the path and fruition
Forms the sole wealth of the *siddhas*; such understanding
Having arisen in my mind, I, Vāgīśvara, set it
Herewith forth (for the benefit of all—*evam*! (II, 30, 6ff)

The white lioness of the snowy heights looks majestic
With her turquoise-like mane, rambling in the ice-capped
mountains;
Although being nearly suffocated by avalanches,
she is not in the least afraid of anything;
For having made the snowy peaks her own habitat is the
heroic nature of the lioness.
The striped Indian tiger of the jungle-thickets
Roams freely in the deeps of forests, his natural abode,
sporting his skin; magnificently bright.

Having made the Himālayan forests his own realm,
It's here that the Indian tiger shows off his prowess.
The darting fish in its very element, the high altitude lake,
Looks beautiful with its golden eyes;
However fierce the waves may be, it is not afraid of
drowning.
Rolling its golden eyes it has become one with the lake.
In rocky wilderness the vulture, king of birds,
Stretching its mighty wings, has made the soaring cliffs
its own range;
Wheeling in ethereal heights, it does not know of fear;
It uses its wings with utmost dexterity and precision,
Being as forbidding as its home, the dizzy granite peaks.*
In his hermitage there lives the *yogī* who has left behind
all worldly affairs;
In his vision of truth serene and at peace,
solitude has become his best companion.**
Whatever apparitions may be conjured up,
demoniacal; he fears them not!
To be since long accustomed to live in retreat—this is the
heroic nature of the *yogī*. (II, 68, 1ff)

TEN FOLD INSTRUCTION

(The *mahāsiddha* addresses two of his disciples :)
Regard contentment as the most precious gem among
hundreds of earthly jewels;
For it is contentment that we are in need of,
the sublime treasure of the jewel-like *Dharma*.
One should regard the vows taken in front of his *guru* as
something very precious;
Furthermore, one should follow all his instructions and
practise in accordance with them.
When you (have to) mix with society, you should
Restrain yourselves so as not to indulge in chats and
gossiping.

* The "four emblems of prosperity"—'snow lioness, mountain tiger, white-bellied fish, great vulture'—are often referred to in the *Hundred Thousand Song of Milarepa*, e.g., in Cantos, 4 and 7.

** Lit. : "solitude-like he walks around."

While you are alone in the solitude of your hermitage,
Statue-like you should meditate, as (unshakable) as
A peg firmly fixed in the grazing-ground.
When mental defilements, anger etc. arise within you,
You must remember their antidote and apply mindfulness.
When you come into contact with the "good things" of this life,
It is necessary that you have cultivated modesty and contentment.
When you see a pretty girl in the prime of her youth,
You should, (in case) desire arises within you, (instantly
Contemplate and thus) eliminate it there and then.
Once you have donned the monastic robes, you should
Put forth effort in your Dharma-practice and persevere.
When doubts arise in your mind, you must know
That it is Māra the Evil One who interferes,
When, regarding the Dharma, some dualistic confusion occurs,
It is useless to practise the Teaching under such conditions.
These are the 'Ten Points of Admonition' (for a recluse),
Written in the hope (that somebody may) benefit by them.
(II, 122, 2ff)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

In reply to questions put by Me-me dKon-mChog sKyabs who, while looking at my locks of hair, remarked scoffingly, "Oh, 'long-haired pretty man' has come disguised as a *yogī*" :

The natural growth of such long hair (as mine) is commonly seen with (so many beings),
Yet a *siddha's* perfection is beyond the ken of artificial and adulterated minds.
Even if one has no insight into the true nature of mind in its pristine state,
There is no reason as to why one should be surprised at (long hair).
Who would be astonished (to see) the mighty fleece of the Chang-thang *yak* ?
Yet I, the *yogī* with beard and long hair, have eradicated

The mental defilements (and don't mind now) growing
My hair long which, however, is not without purpose
and meaning.

Again, at the sight of my knotted hair he asked : "Whom do you imitate by wearing your hair in a knot ?" I replied in the following (verses) :

According to the biographies of the ancient worthies,
the *siddhas*,
It is customary (for people like us) to wear our hair knotted,
Which, as far as I can see, symbolizes insight into the
(true nature of all)
Outer phenomena through contemplation and introspection.
Having converted all outer sense data into meditation-
objects,
By looking within and seeing things as they are
(one realizes) Absolute Truth.
Being embellished with the curtain (like) net-work
of hair worn in a knot,
Symbolizes the winding up of (all one's discriminations)
Between ('inside' and 'outside' realization of Oneness).
Such is my decoration, the "disguise-pretty-man's,"
My imitating the great *siddhas* (of yore)
Such is the disguise I enjoy wearing. (II, 167, 5ff)

Me-me dKon-mChog sKyabs asked : "What is the use of holding a rosary ?" In reply I sang :

This ornamental rosary in my hand makes me
tell my beads
So as to recollect my *gurus*' (virtues and thus control)
my mind.
Telling beads helps me to concentrate the mind
upon my tutelary deities.
Furthermore, to hold an ornamental rosary in one's hand is,
While (being a follower of) the Esoteric School, in
accordance with one's vows.
Thus each (devotee) makes use of his rosary,
And so do I for the reasons stated above. (II, 168, 4)

Looking at my ear-ring consisting of a pearl, he asked: "Why are you wearing an ear-ring?" I replied:

(Never mind, let) the organ of hearing (so fond of) pleasing sounds
(Be) embellished with (outer) adornments such as this ear-ring;
To its delicate filament of silver are affixed red coral as well as a pearl.
This attractive ear-ring thus bedecked with precious things,
Is my "diamond-cutter"[41] cutting through (the tissue of) sweet (yet fallacious) sounds.
Being born a man with the unique chance and duty to practice the Dharma,
I have, once and for all, done away with all mental defilements,
And thus in my heart there is (another) pearl (more precious than anything else);
For this *yogī* has completely removed the twofold obscuration.[32] (II, 168, 5ff)

Looking at my leopard skin the Me-me-le said—not without sarcasm: "The sham *yogī* makes quite sporting his multicoloured garb." In answer I offered the following verses;

(It is true), I, the guileless *yogī* without pretensions were a spotted (leopard skin)
Instead of the monasteries' red (woollens) and yellow (silks),
For in the original state of suchness, at the level of Ultimate Truth,
Whatever phenomenon arises, without affecting the Inner Light,[43]
There it arises as an ornament embellishing the Ultimate.
In the original state of suchness mind-made (multiplicity is,
Though like) a spotted leopard skin, merged in the (pure) Inner Light.
So, what is the harm of wearing a leopard skin instead of donning monastic robes? (II, 168, 1ff)

Again, looking at my finger-ring, he asked: "How is it that you are wearing a finger-ring?" I explained to him:

I, a *yogī* with worldly behaviour, as wearing this
Beautiful finger-ring in order to remember my
Old mother (and all sentient beings to whom I owe
gratitude).
(This ring) studded with various jewels in itself
Symbolizes my mind which has become a wishfulfilling gem;
Whatever (worldly) phenomena may arise in it
They are converted into precious things, beautifying it.
(My finger-ring symbolizes) the "*vajra*-cutter"
Bringing to an end all (worldly) actions. (II, 168, 7ff)

SOME QUOTATIONS FROM EARLIER AUTHORITIES

Our Mahāsiddha has quoted, often long extracts, from the works of earlier Buddhist authorities, teachers and texts. These quotations relate to the disadvantages of existence in *saṃsāra*, merits of human birth, the necessity of holy life, friends good and bad, altruistic piety, ascetic life and the urgency of spiritual realization. Below we produce some of these quotations in translation.

THE CATUḤSATAKA

"As the vital force permeates the (whole) body,
So does spiritual blindness penetrate everywhere.
Therefore, in order to eradicate all mental defilements,
One has to eliminate spiritual blindness."

(*Life and Works*, vol. I, 414, 4)

Ācāryā Āryasūra:

"Even if one were powerful and surrounded by such
affluence
As the chief of gods or a universal monarch are,
He should liken desire, according to its true nature, to
excrements;
For who would cherish excrements, even if just of the size
of a grain of sesamum seed?
Worldly pleasures resemble a smelting-furnace always
burning,
Of which one had better steer clear." (*Ibid.*, 406, 2ff)

More precious than a wish-fulfilling gem is our present life
A unique (chance)—will it ever come again? (to practise
the Dharma).
A (truly) human existence is hard to obtain, precarious,
Evanescent like a flash of lightning in the sky.
Looking thus at all doings in this world (*sub specie
aeternitatis*), and
Having realized how (vain) they are like winnowed chaff,
One should practise day and night and concentrate on the
quint-essential. (*Ibid.*, 406, 6ff)

One should develop such an attitude as is mentioned in the *Catuḥsataka*, namely that to the wise heavenly and hellish states of existence alike are fearful. (*Ibid.*, 407, 2ff)

dGe-bshes Kha-rag :

"All suffering of this endless circle of birth and death
Arises from the concatenation of *karma* and mental
defilements,
From ego-(clinging) and discriminative thought;
Therefore, (to overcome suffering), one should
gain insight
Into the real meaning of non-egoity." (*Ibid.*, 407, 3ff)

Bodhicaryāvatāra (v. 2, p. 80, Darbhanga ed.) :

"A mighty tusker, untamed and in rut,
May work damage and destruction;
But greater still the threat posed by the straying
Elephant-like mind, when unrestrained,
That causes one to fall into the deepest states of woe."
(*Ibid.*, 411, 6). Cf. *Dhammapada*, verse 42.

From the dbEn-gsum :

"Associating with a wise friend furthers one's
spiritual development;
In the company of friend who has accomplished the
'inner renunciation,'
One's own disgust at (worldliness) increases;
When staying with a friend who is beyond attachment,

One wearies more and more of his own desires.
Ah, to such friends one should entrust
himself! (*Ibid.*, 409, 6ff)

Having learnt to see in all ordinary beings one's teacher . . . one should choose his spiritual friend (*kalyāṇamitra*) with particular care. (*Ibid.*, 409, 7ff)

Kha-rag sGom-chung :

"If one's friends are bereft of compassion,
Self-centred and unable to endure hardship,
In whose presence the mental taints only increase,
One had better not associate with them.
My closest (truest) friends are wisdom and effort;
Even if (in their company) the necessities of life
Are not obtained, I shall not mind." (*Ibid.*, 411, 1ff)

The Bodhisattva Asaṅga has said :

"Long-lasting friendship cannot but end in separation,
All property one has taken pains to acquire (has to be)
left behind;
One's body is like an inn where consciousness
As guest puts up for just (a night) and then leaves again;
The *bodhisattva's* practice is (for the sake of a
'higher life')
To leave behind whole-heartedly this life (of
worldliness)." (*Ibid.*, 403, 7)

rGyal-sras Rin-po-che :

"There is neither foe to be defeated,
Nor friend to be pleased, no
Superior to be looked up to, nor
Anybody to be looked down upon;
What else, O *yogī*, have you to do while in retreat
But tame your mind (through contemplating it ?)"
(*Ibid.*, 407, 4ff)

sLob-dpon Rin-po-che says :

"The narrow-minded worldling, scrambles for scrappy
Titbits, denying himself the real—spiritual food.

'Tis only this life that counts for him; as for the next,
he's just confused,
Enamoured of his petty opinions
Which prevent him from seeing Ultimate Truth.
Engaged in trivialities, he has no access to Suchness,
Highest Reality;
Engrossed in mental defilements, he remains
Engulfed in (the ocean of) *samsāra*, experiencing the
Sufferings of hellish life, the outcome of his evil actions.
He is swept away in the bustling crowd of
worldly affairs;
The belly full and comfortable otherwise, too,
He 'applies himself' to the Dharma, but what
Will become of his 'application' when facing
unfavourable conditions ?
Once he is left alone and has to rely on himself
Instead of devotion his (reactions) will be human—
all too human.
Under the impact of mental taints his actions are such as
To ensure his downfall into the states of woe.
When it comes to (practising) the Dharma he
turns coward,
Though never wanting in courage when doing
evil recklessly.
Wasting his existence as a human being and
making himself miserable,
Such a life as his, indeed, proves abortive."

By reflecting thus (one should realize) what renders (all meditative efforts) null and void: The interference of drowsiness so that *samādhi* is not achieved, the hankering after food, renown for competition, etc. coming to the fore again, although one is staying in retreat, and finally one's becoming a roaming ritualist due to not having eradicated all these desires . . . (*Ibid.*, 401, 3ff)

Chos-rje rGya-ras (characterizes the sham *yogī*) in like manner :

"(Though) he set out to strive for his own well-being, he
could not find it,

And (instead of) bringing about the weal of others,
He did nothing but annoy them,
Proving an utter failure both ways, 'the Great Seer'
Like myself, lacking in wisdom and merit as well."

rGyal-dbang demands that :

"Either you should attain proficiency in
tranquillity-meditation
Or practise insight (meditation to realize)
Absolute Truth.
Your, a *yogī's*, attachment to ritualism for belly's sake
Is, indeed, most embarrassing." (*Ibid.*, 402, 4ff)

From the sayings of the sage Padma dKar-po :

"(Outwardly) one may have given up worldly pleasures,
The interplay of attraction and aversion, mental taints,
Ego-grasping, the yearning for company,
near and dear ones;
But what would be the use of staying in retreat,
If one cannot tame his own mind (through recollection ?)
A *yogī* has to prove his mettle by knowing how to
Concentrate on the quint-essential single-mindedly,
Therefore, O Pad-dkar, show determination,
Apply yourself to the (inner practice of the)
Dharma!" (*Ibid.*, 407, 5ff)

Those who stay in the seclusion of mountain-hermitages
Or in monasteries (only physically), don
The robes of 'threefold training' for outer show
And manage to look impressive, though.
(In fact) they are neither capable of running house-hold affairs,
Nor are they wearing the armour of the Dharma
(to withstand the arms of Māra);
Unable to rid themselves of the thought-web of
worldly interests,
Those individuals stay in retreat and find time
hang heavy.
(Consequently) they are overwhelmed by the 'hurly-burly'
of wishful thinking and their

Minds are like sieves which do not hold the water
(of recollection).
They have entrapped themselves, losing (all chances of)
gaining Enlightenment.
If one cannot eradicate ego-grasping, root and branch,
And if one does not appreciate and cultivate
contentment,
He simply is a hypocrite pretending to practise
the Dharma,
Whose confinement to solitude does not serve his
purpose of winning Ultimate
Release. (*Ibid.*, 407, 7ff)

From the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (v. 16, p. 54, Darbhanga ed.) :

"Mumbling prayers, penances, etc.,
Even if engaged in for a long time.
Are useless, so the wise declare,
If the wool-gathering mind strays off the track."
(*Ibid.*, 411, 5ff)

rGya-ras remarked that :

"Even though one may get accustomed to putting up
With unfamiliar places like the snowy abodes of
wrathful deities . . .
If one cannot restrain one's mind,
Enlightenment will never be attained.
The only thing that matters at such places
In no-man's-land is the taming of one's mind." (*Ibid.*,
412, 5ff)

From the sayings of rJe Ngag-dbang bZang-po:

"Humility, friendliness and equanimity,
Not being for or against, and straightforwardness as sixth
These constitute a real *yogī*'s way of life." (*Ibid.*, 409, 4ff)

From the sayings of lCe-sgom Zhig-po:

"The person who has tasted the bitterness of bereavement
And applies himself to meditation aiming,
Here and now, at Ultimate Truth,

While living in the seclusion of inaccessible mountains
And practising for the welfare of all beings,
He, by dint of the (blessings of) the Triple Gem,
Is always happy; (although he calls
Nothing) his own, everything he wishes for
Is showered upon him bounteously.
Bearing in mind this subtle joy through contentment,[44]
One should practise the Holy Dharma!
One should devote himself to visualizing and chanting
So as to gain access to *samādhi* (culminating in) the full
absorptions.
Then one should whole-heartedly cultivate (insight-
Knowledge) in order to realize Absolute Reality.
Such a man's (way of life) always proves a source of
Inspiration for humans and celestials." (*Ibid.*, 413, 3ff)

Ācāryā Nāgārjuna (*Ratnāvalī*, vv. 101, 102):

"(If) just as having disintegrated a plantain with all its
Branches so that nothing remains (composite),
One analyses all (mental and material)
Elements that make up man without (excluding) anything,
(One will realize that) all the
Existential constituents prove without a self.
Upon this score all the Buddhas spoke of (non-self)."

Śāntideva, too, has said:

"One may dissect the trunk of a plantain till nothing is
left (to be dissected).
Likewise, one may analyse all one's (*nāma* and *rūpa*),
Searching for a self—the latter will remain conspicuous
by its absence." (*Ibid.*, 415, 4ff)

Zheng Rin-po-che has it that:

"The seeds of everything are in fact manifestations of
one's own mind
The Buddhas', Bodhisattvas' mind, when revealing itself
as being

Entirely one with the realm of gnosis, of the Absolute
(*jñāna-dharmakāya*);
Immeasurable, immaterial, light *per se*,
It cannot be referred to in terms of substance, colour or
size." (*Ibid*., 415, 6ff)

Chos-rje:

"Staying in solitude where the ancient worthies lodged,
Always conforming to the mode of a recluse's life,
Maintain your devotions, keep your insights alive,
While upholding the meditative tradition of the lineage."
(*Ibid*., 416, 5ff)

(Once having perceived Ultimate Truth and won the insight-knowledge concerning the non-egoity of a person and of things, one is fully enabled to become more and more altruistic without neglecting his further practice of meditation) as has been hinted at by rJe-btzun gLing Ras-pa who, preserving his (experience of) non-egoity through cultivating loving kindness, meditatively exchanges his (own happiness) for (the suffering) of all sentient beings:

"This is the *yogī*'s task; to save through spontaneous
Great Compassion all beings, dear to him like his mother,
From the ocean of *samsāra*, from the six realms of existence."
(*Ibid*., 414, 6ff)

(Lest one should neglect further practice, after having had experiences of enlightenment) rNal-'byor dBang-phyug Chen-po advises:

"If a *yogī* has succeeded in keeping (his practice)
Alive and spontaneous, this will result in full realization;
And having succeeded in preserving, like a
Flowing stream, the continuity of (his meditation),
(His experiences) will grow in maturity.
After having completely discarded all
Thought-constructions and discriminations,
May he make (his whole life)
Become one uninterrupted meditation!" (*Ibid*., 416, 1)

REFERENCES

1. *The Hevajra Tantra*, Part I, p. 44.
2. *Hundred Thousand Songs*, p. 682.
3. op. cit., p. 683.
4. op. cit., p. 684.
5. G.C.C. Chang, *Hundred Thousand Songs*, p. 686.
6. *Dīghanikāya*, Vol. II, pp. 119-120.
7. See Appendix.
8. That is *mkhyen-gnyis*. See H.V. Guenther's *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation by sGam-po-pa*, p. 257ff. (Tib. original, Rumtek manuscript 167a, 5ff.), where it is said with reference to discarding the obscurations of *kleśāvaraṇa* and *jñeyāvaraṇa*: "The ultimate nature of a Samyaksambuddha is most excellent (I) renunciation and (II) spirituality.

   (I) The renunciation means complete escape from the fog caused by conflicting emotions and primitive beliefs about reality . . .

   (II) . . . The Samyaksambuddha has obtained an awareness which is not obscured by the constituents of reality. . . . There is unsurpassable Samyaksambuddha spirituality, the turning of the Dharmacakra and the perfection of sentient beings . . ."
9. Cf. *Lokadhamma Sutta, Aṅguttara Nikāya*, Vol. III, pp. 275, 276 (Nālandā ed.)—*aṭṭha lokadhammā*: *lābha* (gain), *alābha* (loss), *yaso* (fame), *ayaso* (obscurity), *nindā* (blame), *pasaṃsā* (praise), *sukha* (happiness), *dukkha* (suffering); cf. Also *Suhṛllekha*, v. 29, p. 30 (Tib. tr. with commentary, ed. by A. Sonam, Tongspon, Basgo, Ladakh, 1971).
10. On the doctrine of *trikāya* see D.T. Suzuki, *Studies in the Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, p. 308ff.
11. Lit. 'in that connection'.
12. That is, existence in three realms, *kāmaloka, rūpaloka and arūpaloka*.
13. As for these three kinds of *śīla*, see : *Opening of the Wisdom Eye* by H.H. the XIVth Dalai Lama (Social Science Association Press, Bangkok).
14. Most probably the fourfold *tantra* is meant, viz. *kriyātantra, caryātantra, yogatantra*, and *anuttarayogatantra*. (Cf. *Tibetan Buddhism Without Mystification* by H.V. Guenther, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1966).
15. *Candrapradīpasūtra* is also called *Samādhirāja Sūtra*, see p. 179, (Darbhanga Ed.), "*vana-ṣaṇḍa sevatha* . . .
16. Cf. The *Khaggavisāṇa Sutta*, of the *Suttanipāta*.
17. Read *nags* instead of *gnas*.
18. *Ratnāvalī*, v. 274. This verse is not extant in Sanskrit.
19. Lit. : 'body-ego-grasping'.
20. Mi-la Ras-pa's *rNam-thar* (Manali manuscript) 53a, 6.
21. *Ibid.*, 93a, 2.

22. *Ibid.*, 102a, 3ff.
23. *Ibid.*, 90a, 6ff.
24. Three and five poisons are: desire, aversion, delusion and the same three defilements plus jealousy and conceit.
25. *Life and Works*, I, 393-400, 7.
26. *Ibid.*, 401, 7ff.
27. Lit. : Māra's oblation of strewn *tsampa* (*sattu*), i.e. something dangerously inauspicious.
28. *Ibid.*, II, 403, 5ff.
29. Cf. *Suhṛllekha*, v. 34, p. 34. Cf. *Dhammapada*, verse 204, *santuṭṭhi-paramaṃ dhanaṃ*.
30. *Life and Works*, I, 405, 7ff.
31. *mGur-'bum* (Manali manuscript) 138b, 2ff.
32. Cf. *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, vol. III, p. 328ff., *Akkhaṇa Sutta*, viz. (i) hell, (ii) existence as animal, (iii) as *peta*, (iv) as *deva*, (v) being a barbarian, (vi) a holder of perverted views, (vii) a dull-witted person, (viii) not becoming acquainted with the Dharma through not being a contemporary of the *Tathāgata*, etc.
33. *Life and Works*, I, 406, 5ff.
34. *Ibid.*, 412, 3 (Cf. *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, v. 33, p. 58.
35. *Ibid.*, 412, 4 (Cf. *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, v. 108, p. 80, Darbhanga ed.).
36. *Ibid.*, 404, 3ff.
37. *Ibid.*, 413, 6ff. (*Bodhipathapradipa*, v. 4, extant in Tibetan only).
38. *Ibid.*, 414, 6ff.
39. *Ibid.*, 416, 1.
40. *Ibid.*, 417, 3ff.
41. Allusion to the *Vajracchedikā Sūtra*.
42. That is *klesāvaraṇa* and *jñeyāvaraṇa*, 'mental taints' and 'instinctive delusion.' The hindrances or veils constituted by passions or depravities are called *klesāvaraṇa*, while the veils constituted by the falsity of cognizable objects are called *jñeyāvaraṇa*. According to the references in Asaṅga's *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (e.g. pp. 25, 26) the obscurations consisting of 'mental taints' are given up by enlightened being following the Hīnayāna path, 'instinctive delusions' are overcome by those who have achieved the acme of Mahāyāna training; the *bodhisattvas* are required to leave behind Abhidharmic dualism and to realize *dharma-nairātmya* in addition to the realization of *pudgala-nairātmya*.
43. Cf. "Mind is originally light and pure . . ." (*Aṅguttara Nikāya*, Vol. I, p. 10, Nālanda ed.)
44. Lit. the *meaning* (of 'happy . . . everything he wishes for').

APPENDIX

List of Quotations from Sūtras and Śāstras in the Work of Ngag-dbang Tse-ring

Quotations from classical Indian sources as well as later Tibetan works mainly of the bKa'-brgyud-pa Order are found in the following writings of the rDzong-khul MSS—Vol. I:

1. *dPal-ldan bLa-m 'Khrul-zhig Rin-po-che Ngag-dbang Tse-ring-gi rNam-thar Kun-tu-bzang-po'i zlos-gar yid-kyi bcud-len* (The Mind's Elixir, Being the Drama of "Samantabhadra"—the Biography of the Great 'Lama-Jewel,' of the "Holy Madman"—or: "He whose Illusions are Gone"—Ngag-dbang Tse-ring)
2. *rNal-'byor dbang-po Ngag-dbang Tse-ring-gi sku-bstod nyung-bsdus* (A Eulogy Summarizing the Life Story of the Master of Yoga, Ngag-dbang Tse-ring)
3. *Ngag-dbang rNam-rgyal-gyi rNam-thar bsdus-pa skye-rabs* (Prophecies Concerning the 'Brug-pa bKa'-brgyud Lineage)
4. *dbEn-gnas-ri-khrod-pa-rnams-kyi khrims-su bca'-ba tse-'dir mchog-gi go-'phang-la 'dzeg-pa'i them-skas* (Climbing the Ladder to the Highest Realization in this Very Life—Instructions for Recluses)

Vol. II

1. *rNal-'byor dbang-po Ngag-dbang Tse-ring-gi mGur-gyi rim-pa rang-gros lcags-'debs-dang gzhan-phan snying-gi bdud-rtzi-dang bcas-pa kha-thor 'ga'-dyangs chu-thigs tzam-cig* (Series of Hymns of Ngag-dbang Tse-ring, Master of Yoga; Miscellanea—Splashes of the Nectar of Pith-instructions for the Benefit of Others and for Serious Self-exhortation)

As for quotations identified, regarding titles and editions of corresponding works, see: Bibliography.

1. (I, 222, 2ff)	*rGyud*, Cf. Snav-thang ed. 309a; Snellgrove ed.—*Hevajra Tantra*, II, p. 7.
2. (I, 230, 4ff)	dGe-bshes Re-rang-pa
3. (I, 335, 5ff)	mGon-po Klu-sgrub; Cf.: *Nāgārjuna*, *Ratnāvalī*, v. 233-4
4. (I, 336, 2ff)	*br Tag-gnyis*
5. (I, 336, 2ff)	*rGyud-de-nyid*
6. (I, 336, 4ff)	*Zung-'jug-gsal-ba*
7. (I, 336, 5ff)	sLob-dpon Padma
8. (I, 338, 1ff)	sLob-dpon Padma
9. (I, 338, 7ff)	*He-badzra*; Cf. : Snar-thang ed. 344b; Snellgrove ed. *Hevajra Tantra*, II, v(59), p. 84, 85.
10. (I, 339, 3ff)	Ye-shes Grub-pa
11. II, 339, 5)	*mTsan-brjod*
12. (I, 339, 5ff)	*dGong-'dus*
13. (I, 339, 6ff)	*sDom-byung*
14. (I, 339, 7ff)	*Ā-li-kā-li chu-klung chen-po'i rgyud*
15. (I, 340, 1ff)	sLob-dpon Padma
16. (I, 340, 3ff)	*bDe-mchog 'khor-lo'i chos-bdag bskal-ldan lung-bstan*
17. (I, 340, 4ff)	Grub-chen dPag-bsam Ye-shes
18. (I, 341, 1ff)	Ba-na-radna
19. (I, 341, 3)	Kha-rag sGom-chung
20. (I, 341, 4ff)	*dGong-pa lung-bstan rgyud*
21. (I, 342, 1ff)	'Gro-mgon Chos-rje
22. (I, 342, 4ff)	*dBang-mdor bstan*
23. (I, 378, 5ff)	*bDe-mchog sdom-pa rgya-mtso*
24. (I, 379, 3)	Bhang-ga-lar
25. (I, 380, 2ff)	rDo-rje rNal-'byor-ma
26. (I, 380, 3ff)	Ti-lli-pa (Tilopa)
27. (I, 380, 7ff)	*Lung-bstan dus-gsum kun-gsal*

28. (I, 381, 1ff) *Kun-bstan gsal-ba'i sgro-me*
29. (I, 381, 2ff) rJe-btzun Nā-ro, Mai-tri-pa
30. (I, 381, 3ff) sLob-dpon Padma
31. (I, 381, 3ff) *Nang-gi lung-bstan*
32. (I, 381, 4ff) *Dus-gsum kun-gsal*
33. (I, 381, 6ff) rJe Mar-pa
34. (I, 381, 7ff) *sNying-rje Padma-dkar-po'i mdo*; cf .: *Saddharma-puṇḍarika Sūtra*, Vaidya-ed., p. 137ff., Das. ed., p. 220ff.
35. (I, 382, 2ff) *Ting-'dzin rgyal-po'i mdo*; cf.: *Samādhirājā Sūtra*, p. 233ff.
36. (I, 382, 4ff) *Dangs-snyigs 'byed-pa'i mdo*
37. (I, 382, 5ff) sLob-dpon Padma
38. (I, 384, 3ff) *bCom-ldan-'das' khor-lo sdoms-pa*
39. (I, 384, 4ff) rDo-rje bTzun-mo
40. (I, 384, 5) rGyal-ba-nyid
41. (I, 384, 5ff) 'Jam-dpal rTza-rgyud
42. (I, 385, 5ff) rJe Mar-pa
43. (I, 387, 4ff) bCom-ldan-'das Mi-khrugs-pa
44. (I, 390, 2ff) sLob-dpon Padma
45. (I, 390, 3ff) *gTer-kha-'dus-pa skor-dgu'i lung-bstan*
46. (I, 390, 4ff) *Rig-'dzin Zhin-po gLing-pa'i lung-bstan*
47. (I, 396, 1) *Zla-ba sgron-ma'i mdo*, *Candrapradīpa Sūtra*, i.e. *Samadhirājā Sūtra*, p. 179.
48. (I, 396, 2ff) Chos-rje rGyal-sras
49. (I, 396, 3ff) mTsungs-med rGya-dbang-rje
50. (I, 396, 4ff) rJe Ngag-dbang bZang-po
51. (I, 396, 5ff) *Sa-gnad 'dom-gang-gru-bzhi*
52. (I, 396, 6ff) sLob-dpon Padma
53. (I, 397, 3ff) rJe rGod-tsang-pa

54. (I, 397, 4ff)	mGon-pa kLu-sgrub; cf. : *Nāgārjuna, Ratnāvalī*, v. 274.
55. (I, 397, 5ff)	Chos-rje Ras-pa
56. (I, 398, 1ff)	'Brug-pa Rin-po-che
57. (I, 398, 5ff)	rJe Ngag-dbang bZang-po
58. (I, 398, 6ff)	rJe Mi-la; cf. *Mi-la Ras-pa'i rNam-thar*, 53a, 6
59. (I, 399, 2ff)	rGyal-sras Thogs-med
60. (I, 399, 1ff)	rJe-btzum;—*Mi-la Ras-pa'i rNam-thar*, 90a, 6ff., 93a, 2, 102a, 3ff.
61. (I, 400, 4ff)	Byams-pa
62. (I, 401, 2ff)	rGyal-dbang Thams-cad mKhyen-pa
63. (I, 401, 7ff)	Sa-pan (Sa-skya Pandita)
64. (I, 402, 4ff)	Chos-rje rGyal-sras
65. (I, 403, 5ff)	Kha-rag sGom-chung-pa
66. (I, 403, 6ff)	rGyal-sras Thogs-med
67. (I, 403, 7ff)	rJe Lha-rtze
68. (I, 404, 2)	'Gro-mgon Rin-po-che
69. (I, 404, 2ff)	rJe rGod-tsang-pa
70. (I, 405, 7ff)	sLob-dpon kLu-sgrub; *Nāgārjuna, Suhṛllekha*, v. 34, p. 34.
71. (I, 406, 1ff)	Dam-pa Rin-po-che
72. (I, 406, 2ff)	sLob-dpon dPa'-bo
73. (I, 406, 3ff)	Thams-chad mKhyen-pa
74. (I, 406, 5ff)	rJe-btzun Mi-la; *mGur-'bum*, 138b, 2ff.
75. (I, 406, 6ff)	(Ji-skad-du'ang) *Lam-rim*
76. (I, 407, 1ff)	Dam-pa
77. (I, 407, 2ff)	bZhi-brgya-pa (*Caṭuhsataka*)
78. (I, 407, 3ff)	dGe-bshes Kha-rag
79. (I, 407, 4ff)	rGyal-sras Rin-po-che
80. (I, 407, 5ff)	Kun-mkhyen Padma dKar-po

81. (I, 408, 7ff)	*sPyod-'jug*, *Bodhicaryāvatāra* 5, 31-32; p. 58.
82. (I, 409, 4ff)	rJe Ngag-dbang bZang-po
83. (I, 409, 6ff)	dbEn-gsum-pa
84. (I, 411, 1ff)	Kha-rag sGom-chung
85. (I, 411, 2ff)	Pu-to-ba
86. (I, 411, 4ff)	Dam-pa Rin-po-che
87. (I, 411, 5ff)	*sPyod-'jug Bodhicaryāvatāra*, 5, 2, p. 50-55, 16, p. 54.
88. (I, 412, 1ff)	kLu-sgrub, *Nāgārjuna*, *Suhṛllekha*, v. 54, p. 53.
89. (I, 412, 2ff)	Kha-rag-pa
90. (I, 412, 3ff)	*sPyod-'jug*, *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, 5, 33; p. 58-5, 108; p. 80.
91. (I, 412, 5ff)	rGyal-sras
92. (I, 412, 7ff)	Pad-dkar
93. (I, 413, 3ff)	lCe-sgom Zhig-pa
94. (I, 413, 6ff)	Jo-bo rJe—*Bodhipathapradīpa*, v. 4 (see: *Atīśā and Tibet*)
95. (I, 414, 4ff)	bZhi-brgya-pa (*Catuḥsataka*)
96. (I, 414, 6ff)	rJe-btzun gLing-ras
97. (I, 415, 3ff)	kLu-sgrub—*Nāgārjuna*, *Ratnāvalī*, v. 101-2
98. (I, 415, 7ff)	rNal-'byor dBang-phyug Chen-po
99. (II, 15, 3ff)	*bZang-spyod*
100. (II, 15, 5ff)	*'Jam-dpal mtsan-brjod*
101. (II, 16, 1ff)	*rGyud-kyi rgyal-po dpal-brtag gnyis*
102. (II, 16, 2ff)	*Sangs-rgyas 'dus-pa rin-po-che tog-gi mdo*
103. (II, 22, 4ff)	rJe-btzun Mar-pa
104. (II, 24, 2ff)	*bDe-mchog sdom-'byung-gi rgyud*
105. (II, 24, 4ff)	*mTsan-brjod*

106. (II, 24, 5ff)	*Ye-shes gsal-sgron-gyi rgyud*
107. (II, 24, 6ff)	*A-ti-sha baod-pa'i rgyud*
108. (II, 24, 7ff)	*mKha'-'gro zil-gyis gnon-pa'i rgyud*
109. (II, 187, 7ff)	*mGur*
110. (II, 188, 1ff)	rJe Mar-pa
111. (II, 242, 3ff)	*Kun-bzang dgongs-pa bzang-thal*
112. (II, 242, 3ff)	*rDzongs-chen yang-dag-gsang spyi-sdom bla-med rgyud*
113. (II, 350, 3ff)	*mDa-'ka ye-shes mdo*
114. (II, 352, 1ff)	Thub-pa Zhi-dbang-pa
115. (II, 379, 2ff)	*dKon-mchog thugs-rje zlo-gar*
116. (II, 401, 4ff)	*Thub-pa'i dBang-po Shā-kya-thub*
117. (II, 401, 5ff)	U-rgyan Padma 'Byung-gnas

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Index



